

9/66



J.W.Wright. W.H.Mote.

Jenny Lind

(in La Sonnambula)

see Page 287

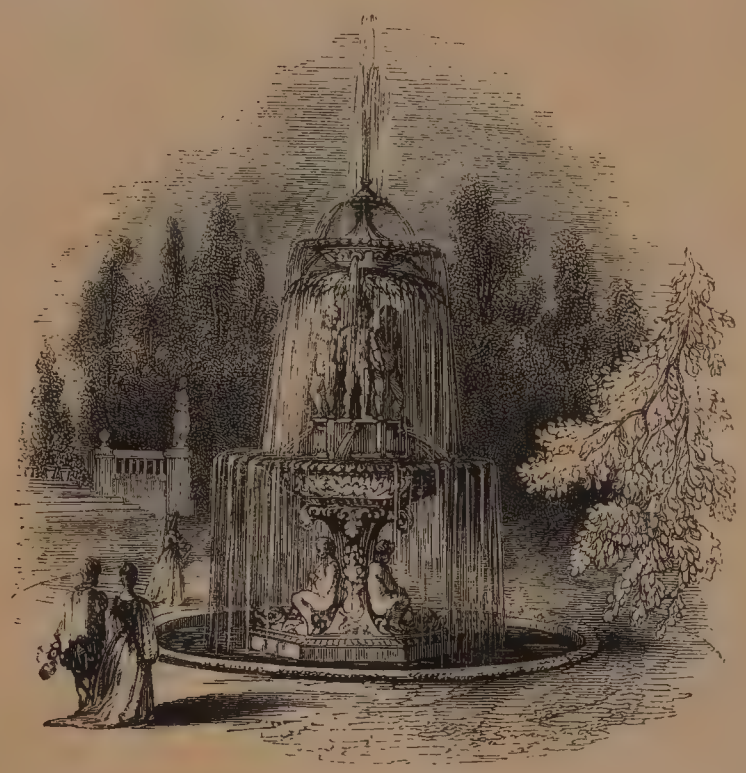
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THE

KEEPSAKE

EDITED BY

THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.



FOR 1848.

LONDON: D. BOGUE, 86, FLEET STREET
APPLETON, NEW YORK. MANDEVILLE, PARIS.

THE

KEEPSAKE

1848.

EDITED BY

THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.



WITH BEAUTIFULLY FINISHED ENGRAVINGS,

FROM

DRAWINGS BY THE FIRST ARTISTS,

ENGRAVED UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF

MR. CHARLES HEATH.

LONDON:

DAVID BOGUE, 86, FLEET STREET.

APPLETON AND CO., NEW YORK; H. MANDEVILLE, PARIS.

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THE LAWYER WHO COST HIS CLIENT NOTHING.*

A TALE.

BY SIR EDWARD BULWER LYTTON, BART.

In the year 1541, and on the second day of September, towards sunset, the little children playing in the meadows at the outskirts of a certain small town in the Marquisate of Brandebourg, were startled by the apparition of a tall man clad in half-armour, who had descended from the hill to the west so noiselessly, that he was in the midst of the young group before they perceived him. They suspended their sports to stare at the stranger, and were struck by the ghastly

* From the "*Thresor d'Histoires Admirables et Memorables de nostre Temps. Par Simon Goulart, Senlisien.* MDC.XX." A rare book, from which Sterne borrowed with his usual hardihood and felicity.

paleness of the features, which were seen through the open bars of the morion. The man's step was unsteady and reeling, and he uttered some inarticulate sounds of pain and distress, as he sought to unbuckle his heavy head gear. In truth, the poor man was overcome by a sharp attack of aguish fever. He was a soldier on his return from Hungary; the heat of the day and the weight of his arms had overtried a frame in which the wounds of a sharp campaign were scarcely scarred over, and, while gasping out his prayer to the urchins to direct him to the nearest inn, he fell to the ground exhausted, and almost insensible. The children ran to call the guards who were loitering round the gates of the town, and the soldier was conveyed to the principal hostelry of the place.

Mine host received the guest with more politeness than was common to him; but, in truth, that was just the period when the little ready money in circulation was chiefly to be found in the pouch of a man-at-arms returning from the wars with his pay and his plunder; and the landlord had no doubt that the soldier had wherewithal to pay for his lodging if he recovered, or his burial if he died. The hostess herself, a comely-looking woman enough, undertook to watch and nurse the poor man. And the neighbours were much edified with the charitable dispositions of their fellow-townspeople.

The soldier had evinced small signs of life when they stripped him of his mail, but when they came to take off his heavy boots, he opened his eyes, and made vehement but ineffectual attempts to speak. At length, as he saw the host carrying the boots from the chamber in which he was placed, probably with the friendly intention to clean and grease them, the soldier contrived to utter sounds of so much uneasiness and anger, that the host stood arrested at the doorway; the soldier then, with a convulsive effort, staggered to the host, clutched from him the right boot, and, motioning to him that he might do what he pleased with the left, reeled to the bed provided

for him, and making a pillow of the boot thus selected, fell into the sleep or stupor of exhaustion.

This boot excited the most profound interest in the breasts both of host and hostess. They retired a little while from the chamber to talk of the boot;—they pondered over the boot—they discussed the boot—they agreed in their surmises, that in that boot there was more than met the eye.

They returned to the bedside of the soldier, he seemed still asleep: the hostess tickled his ear, the soldier moved his head, and the host gave a gentle tug at the boot; the soldier started, his brows met, and, though without opening his eyes or waking, he seemed to feel aware that the boot was in danger—he threw his right arm tightly round it, and dropped his head again upon the boot, with all that weight and solidity which are the characteristics of a head obstinately in earnest.

"Thousand devils!" quoth the host. "But, after all, the man can't live; he seems at death's door, and then we shall know what there is in the boot!"

A clamour of voices below summoned the landlord to a bevy of guests just arrived. The hostess remained to watch the stranger.

A few hours afterwards the soldier woke up. He had recovered his senses, but he was extremely feeble and exhausted. The kind hostess bent over him with a cordial, in which she had put a full pint of the newest and headiest wine which the Marquisate of Brandebourg afforded to its inhabitants. The soldier was much moved by her attention, and somewhat revived by the draught. What with his gratitude, and what with the wine, the poor man became pathetic; he forgot the caution proverbially habitual in a military veteran, and illness unpreceded by gun-wounds being a thing extremely new to his experience, he really had a strong presentiment that he

should never again rise to any trump but the last. With these thoughts he faltered out—

"Ah, dear and charitable *frau*, it is a comfort to have a woman near one's bedside at the hour of death; a woman, you see, feels for a little one about to be an orphan. You have children, dear *frau?*"

"I had one—a boy," said the hostess, lifting up her eyes, as much as to say, "he is in heaven!" and indeed his last act had been in a heavenward direction, seeing that he had been hanged on a tree as a spy, by a murderous old Bohemian general.

"Well," said the soldier, whining, "I have a poor little girl at home in Heilbronn, where I was going to spend the rest of my days. I had been saving and scraping for my old age, but God is pleased to cut me off—the money will go to her, and find her a husband. Wherefore, I pray you, as you value your soul, to take care of this boot, and as soon as the breath is out of my body, rip open the inner leather, and you will find it well lined with gold coin. Pay yourself, charitable *frau*—pay for my burial, and seven masses for my soul, and convey the rest to my little girl, Bettine Karnerach, at the forge, opposite the convent at Heilbronn."

"God be with you, friend," answered the hostess, wiping her eyes, "and I hope you will live this many a year. But if it be otherwise, make your mind easy, not a stiver will I touch of your hoard; and the boot shall go, without need of a cobbler, to your little girl, Bettine Karnerach, at the forge, opposite the convent at Heilbronn."

The soldier wrung the hostess's hand with his dry hot palm, and the good woman continued—

"But in case of the worst, seeing how the priests and the leeches get round a man when he is supposed to be dying—seeing, too, that in a public inn all sorts of characters, good and bad, must abound, and that I cannot always be at your

bedside—considering all this, soldier-friend, think you not it might be the wisest to give me the boot at once to take charge of? I should never get over it, if the tinker, who lodges next room to you, and who has not the best of reputation for honesty, should slip the boot from under your head while you are asleep. And indeed such a pillow tells its own tale of the stuffing!"

"Right," quoth the soldier, dejectedly. "Poor companion, who hast trudged with me so long, farewell! perhaps for ever. Take it, dear *frau*—I have not the heart to *give* it thee."

The hostess seized the boot with one hand—with the other she tucked the coverlid round the sick man; and the wine beginning to work, he fell into a heavy dose, as she stole from the room to her husband.

As soon as this wicked couple had thus got hold of the boot, unripped the leather, and locked up the coins, deuce a bit more cared they for the soldier! They had not the courage to murder him, for fear of detection; but by letting him alone, without doctor or nurse, drink or food, they took it for granted that he would of himself soon depart from this life. The room in which he was placed was in a remote corner of the house, neither tinker nor other living soul slept at hand, to hear his moans or come to his call—so they left him to die as soon as he pleased. All the next day, the poor soldier, abandoned and deserted, wrestled hard with his malady. He could not make his piteous voice heard much beyond the threshold; the hostess now and then crept to the door to listen if he still breathed, and though his sighs and broken exclamations might have melted a heart of stone, that accursed boot stopped up her ears to all humanity and nature.

Confident, at least, that he would not get over the night, the miserable pair retold their treasure, and composed themselves merrily to sleep.

At the dead of the night, the thirst of the sufferer became so irresistible that it gave him the strength of desperation, to rise and crawl forth in search of water. Perhaps, indeed, the total abstinence from food for twenty-four hours somewhat served to assist, rather than diminish, the exhausted powers of nature. He contrived, though with great difficulty, to crawl down the stairs, open the kitchen-door, and find his way to the trough in the yard, at which the horses were watered. Of this unpalatable beverage he drank heartily, and found himself refreshed—when, in tottering back, he fell unawares into a huge cistern. Now, whether the shock of the immersion, or the previous draughts of cold water, wrought a critical change in his complaint, or that the disease of itself had taken a favourable turn, the historian saith not, but on regaining his bed, he broke out into a salutary perspiration, slept soundly, and woke the next morning, still somewhat weak, it is true, but prodigiously hungry, and with sufficient strength to resume his clothes and armour (which were by his bedside), gird on his sword, and, dressed in all save his boots, descend into the kitchen. The hostess was already astir, and a ghost from the grave would not have startled her so much as the sight of her living guest. Nay, one may venture to assert, that if she could have exchanged the guest for a ghost, she would have deemed herself a lucky woman.

Though greatly indignant at the inhumanity with which he had been deserted, the soldier had no suspicion that the active crime of robbery would be added to the passive infamy of abandonment; and being naturally of a proud temper, he disdained to enter into long and idle reproaches. Therefore, scarcely looking at the hostess, but seating himself at the table, he said briefly—

"Give me a manchet and a flask; bring me my boots, and tell me what there is to pay. God's mercy, one com-

fort after starving is to think the reckoning will be all the lighter!"

The hostess said not a word, but she ran to her husband, who was still in his room, ruminating certain plans which the contents of the soldier's boot would enable him to adopt. Mine host swore sundry great oaths when he heard that his guest was waiting for breakfast in the kitchen. What was to be done? The boots, at all events, must be returned. Between the two they cobbled up the rent they had made in the inner leather of the right boot, sponged off the dust from both, and sent them down to the soldier by the maid, with orders to accompany them by the comestibles requested. By this time the kitchen had become pretty full of labourers and idlers in the habit of taking their morning draught at the inn; and all turned with curiosity as the manchet, the flask, and an immense pair of boots were placed on the table before the grim, pale soldier. Kaspar Karnerach (for such was his name) was too much gnawed by his hunger to examine the boots until he had finished the flask and the manchet; but then, lifting the right boot, its astonishing lightness struck him with terror and suspicion. He passed his hand into the interior, and the unsatisfactory touch left no doubt that his strange valise had been rifled. Kaspar Karnerach was not a patient man. But even the most patient seldom submit to be robbed without a murmur,—"Ah, sow that would devour thine own farrow—ah, miserable woman, thief and traitress, what hast thou done with the charge I consigned to thee? My gold crowns—my gold crowns! Where art thou, traitress?"

While bursting forth into such like, and much worse, vollies of vituperation, the soldier strode to and fro like one distracted; and finding that no hostess came to his call, he disappeared from the sight of the startled customers in

search of the untrustworthy bankeress he had so lucklessly selected.

In a few minutes more, loud cries, yells, and oaths, were heard on the stairs above, and presently Kaspar re-appeared, foaming with rage, belabouring the host, whom he pushed before him, with the violated boot, while with the left hand he dragged the hostess by the arm, careless of the kicks and pinches with which she returned his attentions.

The customers rose, and gathered, somewhat menacingly, round the soldier, the host all the time roaring for help. But Kaspar, whose blood was up, dashing the host on the ground, set his foot on his chest, and then, releasing the hostess, drew his sword, and one circle in the air cleared the space before him. He then, not without violent interruptions from the hostess, told his tale, and re-demanded his treasure. But the audience he appealed to was not favourable. The host was a man of note in the town, his brother was chief magistrate, he himself a burgomaster; most of those present were in his debt. The soldier was a stranger, and unsupported; his tale seemed improbable—a boot was an odd place wherein to deposit money. Besides, he had been very ill—he was probably still out of his mind; in short, whether or not, his tale was disbelieved, the audience saw sufficient excuse to disbelieve it. Meanwhile, at a whisper from the hostess, one of the guests had disappeared at the commencement of his harangue. Before he had finished his tale there was a general clamour of incredulity and indignation, in the midst of which, by a violent effort, the host wrenched himself from his unpleasing position, gained his legs, ran to the fire-place, seized on the spit; and encouraged by the sympathy he met with, and the numbers on his side, he ran a tilt at his accuser, calling him all the liars and vagabonds he could lay his tongue

to. The soldier parried the spit, and with a back-handed stroke cut off the host's ear.

Amidst the hubbub that ensued in marched the host's brother, the magistrate, with a score of halberdiers in his suite. They found poor Kaspar flourishing his sword, the host bleeding and bellowing, the guests screaming and yelling and shaking their fists. Kaspar was soon disarmed and handcuffed, yet not before he had wounded one of the halberdiers, and flattened the chief magistrate's hat over his eyes by a stroke with the flat of his sword. It was evening ere peace and quiet were restored to the inn and the town. The soldier was cast into prison, and his trial appointed for the next day.

Prisons at that day were not the comfortable asylums for persecuted merit which they are in this. Formerly innocent persons were the prisoners, and nothing could be worse than the accommodation;—at present a prisoner is generally guilty, and he is treated with every possible consideration.

It was literally a dungeon into which Kaspar Karnerach was thrown, under ground, in the old keep of the town. The stone walls steamed with damp, a litter of foul straw formed the bed, and a broken pitcher of ditch-water, with a parallelogram of black bread, formed the fare. Ill lodging and worse table for a man not recovered from an ague-fever! As day passed, and night advanced, poor Kaspar became extremely dejected; the excitement of anger, too violent for his physical strength, yielded to the reaction of utter despondency. He saw that he had no chance of justice—that his gold crowns were gone from him for ever. Where was the *dot* for his little Bettine?—where the sustenance for his old age? Nay, was it even clear that either the blue eyes of Bettine, or old age itself—always desired, though always feared—were visions to be realized? A stranger in this

accursed town, his despoiler a burgomaster, his despoiler's brother his judge, might it not go hard with his neck? He had maimed his host, he had wounded an officer of justice, he had flattened down the hat over the sacred head of the chief magistrate himself—offences less than which might justify the hanging of him. Deeper and deeper, darker and darker, grew the melancholy shade of his reflections.

Poor Kaspar Karnerach! That vision of thy little Bettine, which had so often cheered thee in thy hardships, consoled thee in thy privations, roused thee in the dread of the battle, warmed thee amidst the snows of the bivouac—that vision now became to thee thy bitterest torture! Thou didst see her before thee, no longer blithe-eyed and laughing, running to meet thee at the threshhold, twining her small hands round thy neck, and renewing the light heart of thy youth with sweet kisses; not thus, but pale and sorrowing, an orphan,—dependent on the stranger for bread, doomed henceforth to harsh words and hard drudgery. And thou didst hear rude voices cry to her, "Up, lazy one, and work; for thy father, on whom we counted, is dead, and thy hands must earn thy bread." Lower and lower on his broad breast dropped the soldier's head—heavily, heavily. Tears gushed from his eyes. "And not a friend," he murmured, "not a friend to save me—no justice upon earth; and as to heaven, what right has a man of violence and strife to count on its aid—no help, no help!"

"Look up, Kaspar Karnerach," said a voice in his ear, "look up. Thou callest not in vain—*I* can deliver thee."

Startled, and scarce believing his ears, Kaspar looked up; and though, just before, the cell had been in profound darkness, he now perceived that a pale but steady light circled through the desolate space, a light like that of morning, while before him stood a small figure, veiled from head to foot; but

through the veil glowed, like balls of fire, two eyes fixed on his own.

The soldier sought to falter an *ave*, but his memory failed him, and the stranger continued—

"Kaspar Karnerach, without me, by this time to-morrow thou wilt be a corpse, and thy Bettine an orphan. While I speak, thy host is with his brother the judge. He has every reason, both of interest and vengeance, to urge thy death; he has stolen thy crowns, and thou hast cut off his ear. The judge is against thee, for thou hast assaulted him; the public are against thee, for thou art a stranger. There will be rare hooting round thy gallows-tree!"

"And who art thou?" asked Kaspar, trying to pluck up his courage; "and what share of my crowns dost thou ask for saving my life, and regaining the rest?"

"Not one," said the stranger.

"Wilt thou do it, then, from pure love of me?"

"From pure love of thee, certainly."

"Then all I can say," quoth the soldier, "is, that I thank thee heartily; and if ever thou hast need of me, in return, thou hast only to say, 'Up, Kaspar, I want thee.'"

"That quite satisfies me, if the contract is a little more formal. On my part, I undertake to obtain thy acquittal, to get thee back thy treasure, to send thee safe home to Bettine. On thine, thou hast but to declare that thou leavest to my disposal, now and for ever, what remains of thee after thy death."

"No," said the soldier, "that goes to Bettine, "I cannot make thee my heir."

"Fool," replied the stranger, "I do not seek to despoil thy daughter. I ask only that which thou canst not leave to her nor to earth; in a word, that invisible and abstract essence of which in life thou hast made precious little use; and which

the scholars will tell thee to look for in a part of thy cranium which thou hast never heard of; in a word, what remains of thee after life—thy soul!"

"Ha!" said the soldier, recoiling with a shudder. "Then thou art the tempter against whom the priests warn us. Avaunt, Satan! get thee behind me—I spurn and spit upon thee."

"Tut," said the stranger, calmly, "If I were not fond of doing things in a legal and business-like manner, I should leave thee to hang; sure that I shall have thee all the same, with bond or without. Hast thou not committed sins enough to mortgage a score of souls more precious than thine? Reflect, since the age of seventeen to forty-eight hast thou not been engaged in bloodshed and rapine? Recollect all the throats thou hast cut, the towns thou hast fired, the houses thou hast sacked."

"In the fair way of my trade as a soldier," said Kaspar; "my captain must pay for me if I am wrong—go to him."

"And is it thy captain who is to blame for that little affair in Moldavia, when thou didst rifle three monks and their abbot, and didst get drunk upon the risdales of the church? Is thy captain to blame for that stab in the dark thou gavest, twenty years ago, to thy rival, for an innocent kiss to the mother of Bettine? or for the share thou hadst but last winter in stopping the fat beeves that belonged to the holy convent of Igguldstadt? Murder and sacrilege, pretty trifles, I trow! Add to these, all the prayers thou hast forgotten; the promises thou hast never fulfilled; the rosaries thou hast not counted; the sackcloth thou hast not worn; the stripes thou hast not inflicted upon a hide tough enough, by my hoofs, to have borne them unflinching. Recall thy drinkings and thy gamblings, thy quarrels and thy leasings, thine oaths and thy cheats. Let them pass before thee one by one,

while I speak—Ho, soldier; ho, sinner; dost thou think that if thou diest to-morrow, thy soul can escape me?"

While the tempter thus said, a gloom of intense horror and despair settled upon the mind of poor Kaspar Karnerach. Verily and indeed, one by one, all his sins rose before him like visible things; the dread phantasmagoria of the past succeeded each other like shapes in the magic lantern.

The demon continued, "Well, Kaspar, is the bargain so hard?—am I as bad as they paint me? Do I not offer thee terms too advantageous for a rascal like thee to reject? Instead of dying to-morrow, thou shalt live out thy natural term, peaceful and merry. I will not claim thee these forty years. Thou shalt be fourscore and eight before I tap at thy door. Perhaps thou doubtest still that thy sentence will pass. Look, and listen."

And straight the walls of the dungeon receded, and Kaspar saw the judge and the inn-keeper closeted together, and heard the judge say distinctly, "Set thy mind at ease, brother mine, it shall be more than ear for an ear. The cursed soldier shall hang on the linden before thy door, and the crows shall pick out his eyes."

To the orbs thus unfeelingly menaced Kaspar clapped his hands in dismay, and the vision was gone. His despair was too great for his courage, much as that had been proved.

"Well," said he, at last, "before I can decide, I ask one condition at least. You can conjure the absent before me, it seems. Let me see Bettine once more—just as she is now—let me fancy I kiss her in sleep."

The demon interrupted the father with a laugh full of irony and scorn. He represented the absurdity of such a sentiment in a rogue so abandoned. He argued and sneered; he pooh-poohed, and tut-tutted. But the soldier was naturally obstinate, and he grew the more dogged to insist, the more the

fiend was reluctant to concede. At last, evidently seeing that unless he complied he should lose all the advantage he had gained, the tempter, with considerable repugnance, yielded the point. "But mark," said he, "it can be but the hundredth part of a moment! See this nail that I draw from thy morion. Only for the space of time that elapses while the nail drops from my hand to the floor, canst thou see thy Bettine. Look thy best."

The soldier looked; Bettine was before him; the little room at the forge; the small bed at the corner; the crucifix hung at the bed-head. Bettine's sweet face was pale and disturbed; some dream scared or distressed her; and her lips plainly syllabled the words—"Father, God save thee!" Then the soldier's soul seemed to make itself palpable and felt within him; it seemed to flutter and writhe in agony—to appeal to heaven against the base fears of the body, by which its divine essence was so mercilessly endangered. Its voice became audible; as a frightened child on the breast of its mother, it wailed for succour and deliverance. All those phantoms of past sins, so lately terrific, lost their power of despair. Beside the doom of an eternity, how small seemed the misdeeds of hours! Suddenly—as the form of a giant angel, its feet on the earth, its brow encircled by the glory of the loftiest stars—rose Hope. "Son," said the angel, "whom I have reared from the cradle, wilt thou desert me at the gates of the tomb? Not till the tomb is closed, canst thou know me as I am! All my beauty—all my power—are never shown but in the land beyond the grave. Do thy sins dismay thee? I was created to rescue men from sin. Nor guilt nor demon has lasting authority on the soul while it clings to the garments of Hope."

The voice died—the dream faded. Before the soldier stood the tempter, and the nail had not yet reached to the floor.

"Fiend!" said the man delivered, "if in the hundredth part of a moment the soul escaped from the body can feel as mine has felt, what must be eternity? Avaunt, and let me die! I will take God's judgment on my sins; and to God's mercy I will trust my child." So speaking, the soldier made the sign of the cross, and the tempter vanished.

It was with a composed and cheerful mind that Kaspar Karnerach saw the day gleam through his bars. Long before noon, the whole burgh was astir; and, accompanied by a file of halberdiers, Karnerach was led into court to take his trial.

The judge was in the awful seat; the host, with his head bandaged, the halberdier whom Kaspar had wounded, and a goodly crowd of witnesses were assembled, intent upon supplying the mob with that most popular of all sights—a man hanged.

Just as Kaspar was being led to the bar, he felt his arm pinched, and an unfamiliar voice whispered in his ear—"Say that you leave your defence in the hands of your counsel."

Kaspar looked round, and saw before him a little man with a sharp hungry face, and eyes that seemed keen enough to pierce through a wall.

"Alas!" said the soldier, "I have not now wherewithal in my pouch for a fee for counsel."

"Never let that vex you," said the little man, smiling. "I will run the chance to take my costs out of the plaintiff. If I miss here, I hit there; that's my maxim."

Before Kaspar could answer, the man had vanished amongst the crowd. The soldier rubbed his eyes, and fancied himself dreaming. He was now placed at the bar; all eyes glared malevolently on him; silence was proclaimed; and the case was opened. The host showed the place where an ear had once been; told a moving tale of the kindness himself and

wife had shown to the soldier; enlarged on the villainy of Kaspar's trumped-up tale of the money in the boot and his shameless trick at extortion; foiled of swindling his benefactor, he had then attempted to murder him. The hostess confirmed the tale; the witnesses proved the violence of the blood-thirsty soldier; the halberdiers deposed as to his armed resistance of justice; and the magistrate, shaking his head, and groaning ominously, asked Kaspar Karnerach what he had to say why sentence of death should not be passed against him.

Poor Kaspar gasped, and looked round; and, involuntarily, and as if the speech were not his own, mumbled out that he would leave his defence in the hands of his counsel.

"And here I am!" cried a shrill voice; and a personage not hitherto perceived, but robed in the official gown of a counsellor of the High Court of the Marquisate of Brandebourg, bustled up to the table.

At the sight of this unexpected assistance, the host's face fell, and the judge looked confused; for the counsellors of the High Court were very formidable gentry in that little town; and a man who could command the services of one of that learned and important fraternity was not to be put to death quite so easily as our host had reckoned upon. Meanwhile the lawyer began with exceeding volubility. He sketched a short outline of Kaspar's birth, services, and career; and, to Karnerach's great astonishment, this was done with the most accurate fidelity, except that only all the good was told, and all the bad was omitted. Those peccadilloes, the review of which had so dismayed the soldier in his dungeon, were carefully suppressed, and in their stead appeared actions of valour and devotion—charity and goodness. The poor soldier could have wept to hear himself so touchingly described. The lawyer's eloquence began wonderfully to move and interest the audience, against their will.

And when the lawyer diverged to narrate how he, Kaspar Karnerach, had once saved the life of the Marquis of Brandebourg himself, the loyalty of the court could scarcely be restrained from acclamations of applause. The lawyer proceeded to explain exactly how the soldier had acquired his crown pieces; how he had carefully saved them; how he had refrained from wassail and gaming, and turned miser, for the sake of his child; how he had counted on the portion to his little Bettine—a portion won by bold deeds and honourable wounds; how he had retired from service with a eulogy from his captain at the head of his troops; how all his old comrades thronged round him to bid "farewell and God speed him;" how he had sewn up his gains in his boot; how he had been taken ill on the road; how he had reached the inn; and how he had entrusted his treasure to the care of his hostess. "And as for you, poor woman," exclaimed the advocate, abruptly, turning to the landlady—"as for you—why should I blame you?—women are but the tools of their husbands, and you are punished enough. Ah! little thought you that one of those gold crowns was this very morning given to Gretchen, your maid, for a kiss behind the door, while you were lacing your boddice."

"Thou villain!" exclaimed the hostess, shaking her fist at her husband, who stood open-mouthed and aghast.

"Ay!" continued the lawyer, "nor did you dream that that precious spouse of your own promised Gretchen to run away from you, and live with her as his wife;—supporting the hussy on those very gold crowns for which you perilled your life and lost your honesty! Come, now, would you do it again, my good *frau?*"

"No, and in troth!" cried the hostess, rushing to her husband. "And is this my return, you good-for-nothing perjured deceiver!"

"Such a fine woman as you, too!" sighed the lawyer; "and such a minx for your rival! Well, at least you see that stolen goods do not prosper!"

"But I will have my revenge!" cried the hostess, reading her husband's guilt in his face. "And if I did take the poor soldier's money, you know it was because you commanded me, vile slave that I was!"

"Hush! hush!" groaned the host.

"You hear her?" said the lawyer, triumphantly. "But one is as good as the other—courage, mine host! If you meant to run away with your Gretchen, your wife had promised little Herman, the barber, to rob you, next Thursday, and set off with him to open a shop at Cologne!"

"Ah, wretch," cried the host, enraged in his turn, "I suspected as much; and that's the reason"——he stopped short.

"That's the reason you sewed the rix-dollars and gold crowns up in your doublet! see"—and before the host was aware, the lawyer had stepped up to him, and with a touch of a knife he drew forth, unripped the doublet, and the coins came clattering down on the ground!

No words can describe the excitement that ensued at this exposure. But the judge, alone retaining his presence of mind, and anxious yet to bring off his brother, cried "Silence!" and as soon as the hubbub subsided—"Worthy counsellor," said he, "it is not on mere appearances that we can judge a worthy man like the plaintiff, whom you have contrived so strangely to turn into defendant. If it be true, as you state, that this bad woman wanted to elope from her husband, and from motives of jealousy or revenge to ruin him, how do we know but what all this has been a trick between you both—how else could you have arrived at the knowledge of things done between the closed doors of men's homes? Doubtless the woman took the money herself, and sewed it up in the

doublet unknown to her husband. Is it not so, my brother?"

"Ah, ah,—ho, ho," said the lawyer, "let your brother speak for himself;" and as he said this, the lawyer threw back his gown,—his form seemed to dilate—taller and taller, larger and larger he grew, as he stood close by the landlord.

"Well then," cried the host, plucking up courage, and hoping still by the judge's connivance to be brought out from the perilous dilemma into which he had fallen, "well then, devil fly away with me, if I know how the crowns got into the doublet!"

"That is all that I wanted and waited for!" cried the lawyer, "miss here—hit there;" and he pounced on the host like a hawk on a sparrow. Up flew the roof of the court—sky and cloud peered within—and high into air, out of sight, flew the fiend and his victim.

Such is the true history of Kaspar Karnerach, his host, and his boot, as it is told in the 4th book *De Præstigiis Dæmonum*, c. 20, and corroborated by the illustrious and unimpeachable testimony of Paul Eitzen, 6th sect. *de ses morales*, conveying the notable and comfortable truth, "that the devil himself can be a friend at a pinch, provided your soul is your own and your case is a good one."

As for little Bettine, her descendants still live at Heilbronn, and you may see in their possession the identical boot so celebrated in the ancient records of the Marquisate of Brandebourg. The crowns, to be sure, are all gone. Their loss is easily accounted for, since the good success of Kaspar's trial had given the family a taste for litigation; and somehow or other they never found a lawyer who let them off as cheap as the devil!

THE AWAKENER IN THE DESERT.

FROM THE GERMAN OF FREILEGARTH.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

In the still desert, near the streaming Nile,
  Behold,—a lonely, kingly lion stands!
Yellow his hue as is the thick simoom,
  Yellow as are the dull surrounding sands.

Over his breast his beautiful mane doth hang,
  Massive, and like the mantle of a king;
And the hair, bristling like a jagged crown,
  Compact and close, doth round his forehead cling.

Raising his head amidst the waste, he roars:
  Hollow and wild the echo sounds and drear,
Rolling along the desert gloomily,
  Till Mœris' shuddering waters feel a fear.

The panther's coat grows rough with fear and rage:
  The swift gazelle flies trembling from the roar:
The camel turns aside: the crocodile opens
  His eye, and listens on the reedy shore.

Back from the strand of Nile the sound returns,—
  Back from that stony tomb where kings are hid;
And, as it passes by, one mummied thing
  Awakens, in the heart o' the pyramid.

Sitting upright within its narrow home,
  It sighs—"I thank thee for that angry threat!
For many thousand years I have slumbered here;
  But the king-lion's voice awakes me yet.

" Oh! I have dreamed ages away!—Where, now,—
Where are the years with fertile conquests strewn,
When Victory waved her banner o'er my head,
And thy strong lion fathers drew me on?

" Then sate I aloft, upon my golden car,
Whose shafts, all gold, were carved with shapes divine,
Whose wheels shone bright with pearls and diamond stones;
And the City of a hundred gates was mine.

" This foot, now withered and un-nerved by death,
Upon the Ethiop's tangled hair once trod;
And on the Indian's sunny brow; and on
The desert Arab's neck,—as might a God!

" And this lean hand, which now the byssus cramps,
Once—when its strength was free—subdued the earth!
Ay,—all these hieroglyphics dimly say,
I thought, of yore,—and said, and brought to birth.

" Even this mountain-grave, which hides me now,
I myself raised upon the sandy soil:
I sate upon my throne, hemmed in by spears,
Whilst my slaves lashed the labourers on to toil.

" Nay, the broad streaming Nile itself was mine,
My subject, once,—and rocked me on its breast.
Now—the great Nile still flows: 't will ever flow:
But *I* have disappeared,—and gone to rest;

" And all around is dark."—There the voice stopped;
And the lone lion, startled, ceased his roar:
The dead man's eye grew dim: his eyelids closed;
And he sank back,—slept,—and awoke no more!

A TALE THAT WAS TOLD TO ME.

BY CAMILLA TOULMIN.

"Restore the Dead thou Sea."

MRS. HEMANS.

Amid all the scenes of strange adventures, dauntless daring, appalling dangers, and unimagined perils, I believe every one, from the idiosyncrasy of his or her own mind, finds a peculiar interest in some one particular range of subjects; and it may be that the eagerness with which we read or listen when such scenes are described is the evidence of a taste which, with over-indulgence, would grow morbid, or of an enthusiasm quite capable of becoming extravagant. I confess to such a weakness myself. I can listen with comparative calmness to the most exciting narratives of all land expeditions and adventures, whether they include an Alpine ascent or an encounter with banditti; a lonely march on the wild Prairie, or the passage of a caravan across the scorched and scorching Desert. But directly the wanderer lifts his foot from the dry land, and trusts himself to the slumbering Ocean, a new train of feelings has birth, and the interest in a stranger's safety quickens into something really approaching personal sensation.

Let the red earth of battle-fields proclaim trumpet-tongued *their* story, and the trampled human clay rise up in judgment to bear it witness. The tale is blazoned on history's page through the long course of the rolling centuries; the courage of Action always, and—of Endurance sometimes. But the

glittering tinsel wreath of Glory only hides the ghastly Moloch-idol War; and I am dull at perceiving the subordinate heroism whose leading spring is mean ambition, avarice, or hate. Such heroism, too, finds always a chronicler; but Ocean is for the most part the keeper of its dread secrets, and only from the faint breath which now and then floats across the waves may we guess at the human agonies the remorseless waters have at once created and extinguished! Perhaps it is this vagueness—the certainty that stranger tales remain untold than any which rumour has caught and echoed—which lends so strong an interest to stories of shipwreck or disasters at sea, appealing to the unsatisfied imagination until it aches with the realization of the scene. And yet what deeds of self-denial and noble self-devotion *are* registered and stand forth in their lovely radiance, to redeem and vindicate mankind; alas! beside those awful revelations of brute selfishness to which it would seem that inferior natures are reduced in the hour of imminent peril! But this is a long exhortation to "the tale that was told to me."

There were more passengers on board the good ship Falcon than I should care to number. Many were young and for the most part buoyant with hope, as became the living freight of the "outward-bound."

India is not looked upon exactly as it was even fifteen or twenty years since. People are not quite sure that gold is to be picked up there for the stooping, or that diamonds are showered down at the feet of Europeans; but still there is a prevalent notion, vague enough sometimes, that fortune is more easily wooed beneath the orient heavens than under that soberer sky which canopies the spot of earth called England—a spot indeed! rising from the blue waters just large enough to be a throne whence delegates are sent to rule the world, and to which her children-wanderers look up

with loving loyalty. Well is it that youth is prone to build its fairy castles, and does *not* dream of early death, or lingering, life-sapping disease, or of enervated mind—the irremediable penalties too often paid for all that the tropics can give. And so the ardent cadet has more often a vision of knighthood and crosses of honour than of "sick leave" and blighted hopes; and the merchant thinks less of an arid and forgotten grave than of returning in manhood's prime with the gold that he teaches his heart shall recompense love for its long and lonely martyrdom.

Among the passengers of the Falcon, however, was one not exactly belonging to the usual category of outward-bound adventurers. Mr. Francis Rayton had made his fortune in India, and that in a very few years. He was something under forty, and had suffered less from the climate than most English residents in Calcutta. Nevertheless, his physicians had recommended the long sea voyage in preference to the overland journey, since it was absolutely necessary that he should return for a few months to wind up mercantile affairs in which tens of thousands of pounds were involved. His active, energetic mind demurred at this decision for awhile; yet he gave way, for health had never seemed so precious as now that fortune had made hope reality, and all the beautiful things of life were opening to him. Francis Rayton was not a common character; and eagerly, almost greedily, as he had sought wealth, he had never sought it as an End.

Caroline Smythe was a girl of twenty, the daughter of a general officer, going out under the protection of a widowed friend, to join her parents. She had the beauty of youth, and a little beauty besides; with all the pride of what the Spaniards call "blue blood," and that pride, in addition, which I never yet found wanting in a soldier's daughter. She would not have married a merchant if life and death had hung in the

balance, for she would not have suffered her own heart to touch the beam; but she was a coquette to that heart's core, and Francis Rayton was by far the handsomest and most intellectual man on board the Falcon. How was it possible she could refuse to gratify the chief *besoin* of her existence?

Helen Seymour was making the voyage without other protection than that of the blunt but kind-hearted captain. Perhaps she did not require any at all. She was not very young; sometimes she looked about five-and-twenty, at others you would have taken her for thirty at least. She was neither handsome nor beautiful—far less could she have been called pretty; that term would have seemed at once a something too much and too little to award her. Yet she was not plain. Her figure was good, she had a small, white, well-shaped hand, and most people thought she had a "nice" face; but few knew the expression which, when happy or animated, beamed through her eyes, flushed in her cheek, and quivered round her lips. Few, because happiness had been doled out to her most scantily, and she was not of that lucky temperament which can find excitement in trifles. Helen had already outlived her nearest relations, and she was poor; going out to India to educate the children of a second cousin, who entertained the romantic notion of bringing them up in one of the healthier northern settlements instead of following the commoner plan, and tearing her own heart-strings by sending them to England.

Two more individuals will complete the cluster it is necessary to describe. James Lawson had been for some years a confidential clerk or agent to Mr. Rayton, and was now going out to be left in a situation of considerable trust in the Calcutta establishment. His wife and infant child were with him; and as they made home of any spot of earth, he did not pretend to sentimental regrets at leaving his native land for

a long and indefinite period. The young couple had struggled through the early trials of poverty; and their affection had previously been tested by absence and a long engagement; but now, after three years of wedded happiness, and bright fortune shining steadily in the horizon, life seemed something more precious, more soul-satisfying than even youthful dreams had pictured it. The Lawsons were quiet and retiring in their deportment; for, with a feeling which has quite as much pride as humility in it, they were conscious that they were only recently lifted a step or two in society. But Helen Seymour had an intuitive knowledge of character; and knowing them very speedily, could not help being interested. Scarcely cultivated enough in mind to be congenial companions to her, she yet honoured them most truly, and in witnessing their affection felt as if something in which she had before half blindly believed was now made known to her. There was a manly tenderness in his behaviour towards his wife, as far removed from lover-like adulation as it was deeper in its springs and dearer to her heart—manly, for that same tenderness, the very exhalation of true heart love, is an attribute that never does emanate from the vain, selfish egotist; or the frivolous butterfly of the world; or from the not more manly slave of his own ardent passions. And then, on little Fanny's part—for she was a little creature, and looked up to him literally as well as figuratively—the entire devotion, and perfect, unbroken, unclouded confidence, were something beautiful to witness; and with the constant ministering of each to the other made up a spectacle the most delightful in the world to the quick eye of the poet-philosopher; and Helen, however humble in the ranks, yet, like many others who have never "penned their inspirations," belonged to that class.

It would fill a volume to detail, scene by scene, how

intimacies were formed between some of the parties I have named. Amid the nearly incessant occupation of his past life, Mr. Rayton had had very little opportunity of mixing in female society, or perhaps that with which he had met in India had not been sufficiently attractive to induce him to make opportunities and cultivate it. Even while in London, business had pressed so heavily upon him, that some of his oldest and most valued friends he had neglected to visit. But life on board the Falcon, where at least no post came in or went out, was comparative leisure; and he was hardly sensible how much of that leisure was in reality filled up by conversation with Helen Seymour. Some mysterious affinity of feeling and opinion seemed to have drawn them together; and yet there were two or three of her attributes against which he had entertained a positive prejudice. For instance, he had always thought politics quite out of the scope of a woman's reasoning; yet when he found Helen's mind familiar with the great truths of humanity—those truths to the exposition of which his ardent yet half-secret ambition lured him—the earnestness of life, and the thousand topics which must branch from such conclusions, he could not but acknowledge, though not without surprise, that her sympathy and companionship were none the less delightful because she was a woman.

It was not in a coquette's nature to look calmly on while the object she had selected for a flirtation showed an evident preference for an "old-maidish" rival. Caroline certainly knew nothing of politics beyond having been taught to scorn, with all the hate of ignorance, the very party to which Rayton belonged; if, indeed, one of so wide and comprehensive a mind could have narrowed it to the jealousies which seem inseparable from party feeling or connexion. But she had a trick of appealing to him for information, and throwing herself on his forbearance, in that pretty, confiding, feminine

manner, that is by no means without its fascination; and it was not easy to meet the glance of her soft large hazel eyes, as, with a toss of her head, she threw back her clustering ringlets, and make acknowledgments, at the same moment, of any mental deficiencies. Caroline had nothing in the Past but school-girl days and—her numerous conquests—to remember, and the Present seemed made to enjoy according to her fleeting inclinations. Helen had felt, and seen, and suffered—had *lived* all her Past, and for the Future was brave to endure and high principled to act. Francis Rayton stood between a good and an evil genius, and had he questioned his own heart he would have discovered the fact. But he did not do so—he had always looked on love as an episode in a man's life, and one that should only be indulged in on a proper occasion. Now this occasion he had for years been accustomed to consider his final settlement in England: and so he suffered himself to be swayed by the impulse of the moment, and what is so very foolishly called Chance.

Weeks had passed—they expected to touch at the Cape in a day or two.

"Pray take my arm for a turn on deck this delicious evening," said Mr. Rayton, approaching Helen, who was standing near one of the lady passengers. Helen never sought any particular attention from him, but perhaps she did not quite conceal that it gave her pleasure to receive it.

"I never beheld so beautiful a sky," she exclaimed, pointing to the horizon, where the moon was rising, like an orb of gold, out of the dark waters. "And the sea," she continued, "slumbering like a gentle friend, instead of the cruel tyrant which we know an hour might make it."

"Nay," said Rayton, "do not let us think of storms and danger. Our voyage has hitherto been so prosperous, and I

have such faith in the Falcon, that I do not suffer myself to dream of disasters."

"You speak with all the confidence of an old voyager," replied Helen, smiling; "but beyond a steam-boat excursion of a day or two, this is my first acquaintance with 'blue water,' and I am not yet sure how far I confide in it."

This allusion to steam-boat excursions led to reminiscences of Helen's continental travel; and though she had often spoken on the subject before, to Rayton's ear there always seemed something new to tell, for she described scenes he had ardently longed to visit. Possibly some vague notion crept into his mind that she would be a charming companion amid the ruins of empires, in the galleries of art, or wherever the spirit of poetry hovered. Talking of Art led—I cannot tell how, though it often does—to the subject of Love; and Helen spoke with the frankness of a true-hearted woman who was far too honest to feign either indifference or ignorance of the theme. And so they conversed earnestly, not flippantly, on the great Lottery of Life, from which so few prizes and so many blanks are drawn—or rather, over which it would seem some evil destiny presides to mismatch the assorted pairs. It might be fancy, but each thought there was a slight quiver in the voice of the other, and a modulation that made the tone different from that of ordinary discourse. There was something, too, in the solemn grandeur of the moon-lit ocean that well accorded with the sentiment which ruled the hour; for if the loveliness of nature fails among coarser clay to awaken the loftiest sympathies of humanity, its contemplation always "feeds the flame" where once it is kindled. Again Francis Rayton and Helen Seymour spoke of tempest and shipwreck; but now the theme was blended with stories of heroism and devotion, and of the loving hearts that had gone down together. Even Rayton—the busy money-winner, the

man of the world—though capable of deeper sentiment and purer passion than he himself was aware—acknowledged that there might be cases in which such a death would be sweeter than all life could give to the solitary survivor.

"Of this I am sure," he exclaimed, "that the impulse of the moment, while it ruled the conduct, would be the test of the heart's affection."

Was it impulse, or accident, or absence of mind, that made him press for an instant, almost with an interlacing of the fingers, the ungloved hand which rested on his arm!

On the second finger of that hand, Helen constantly wore a beautiful emerald ring, nearly the only ornament of value which had been remarked about her, and which she had on one occasion spoken of as her dearest memorial, that of a dead sister.

Rayton's little finger was encircled by a curious antique cameo.

They were silent; but the silence to one heart at least had a delicious meaning. It was broken by a voice close at hand.

"Oh, Mr. Rayton," said a tall cadet, a boy in years, but longing beyond all things to be considered a man, "oh, Mr. Rayton, pray come and try your persuasions with Miss Smythe; she won't touch her guitar for all we can beg and implore. But every one says a word from you will be sufficient."

"Really they do me honour," replied Rayton, hesitating, and not at all grateful for having his *tête-à-tête* broken.

"Pray go," said Helen, with a beautiful smile; for she was one of those women as incapable of feeling mean, petty jealousy, as she was of herself giving cause for it.

He went; and the sullen beauty relented at what were after all but common-place compliments. She sang several

French and Spanish love songs, now archly, now pathetically, and as the evening waned Rayton found himself drawn into the vortex of frivolity, and lavishing all his *petits soins* on the coquettish Caroline. Helen was not present, either to share his attentions, or distract him from them. Fresh from that interview, she could not have joined the general society of their fellow-passengers. She lingered for some time on deck, and if—as she leaned her head on her hand and gazed upon the heaving waters—her reverie had been translated into words, it would have run thus—

"So good—so noble!—so *true*—I am sure. Oh, that we had met years ago—I could have made him happy and helped him to be great. Yet now, if it were possible"—and she pressed her hands to her side, as if to still her heart's wild beating, then covered her face with them—"at least it will be happiness enough for me to love him—yet could I endure he should love another?" And reverie melting into prayer, she ejaculated "Oh, God have mercy upon me! the first love of ignorant youth is faint and flickering—now I know that it is the *last* love which is destiny!"

But the breeze had freshened; for long unnoticed by Helen till she shivered in her light mantle, and then she sought her cabin, and her flushed cheek pressed the pillow, while still the one reverie prevailed—the beautiful reverie of the ideal made palpable—dissolving from time to time, as before, into the devout petition, "Oh, God have mercy upon me!"

And the breeze still freshened; but those who were wearing away the hours with song and mirth and idle speech heeded it not, and in a few hours even they sought slumber; and all were dreaming, sleeping or waking dreams, save the watchful crew who guarded and guided the floating palace.

But the breeze still freshened; and there were heavings and rollings of the stately vessel, that made rest and slumber

difficult or impossible. And there were noises overhead; and the trampling of many feet, and the hauling of ropes, and the quick command—sometimes the angry word and muttered imprecation. And behold when morning dawned there was a murky sky above, chequered from time to time by the swiftly-driving clouds, that seemed but the servants of the fierce capricious winds. The treacherous ocean, lashed to fury, heaved and foamed in monstrous billows round the devoted ship; and the shrieking cry of the sails, as they split like paper, was scarcely to be distinguished amid the roar of the TEMPEST! Terror and anxiety had set their seal on every countenance; brave men grew pale and silent, and timid women wept and prayed aloud.

Very few were so calm as Helen Seymour; she spoke words of hope and encouragement to the fearful and fainting; exhorted even the rough sailors to do their duty with brave composure, and seemed by her own example to instruct all to meet with resignation the will of Providence, yet to use all human means to avert disaster. A terrible calamity was at hand; the skilful captain and two men at his side were swept by one huge and sudden wave into the surging waters. In a desperate attempt to rescue them, a boat and more lives were lost. For awhile the very will of those who were next in command seemed paralysed, and confusion reigned. It was during this time that Helen applied herself to assuaging the sufferings of a poor woman who had been injured by the fall of a mast, rending her own dress to bind up the bleeding arm.

Francis Rayton gazed at her from time to time, and spoke to her occasionally; but mingling with his admiration, a feeling almost of awe crept over him. She seemed something above himself—even beyond his comprehension; yet ever as her eyes met his, there was a light of faith and trust and

almost gladness shone from them, which was more divine than that of any earthly hope.

Lawson and his wife sat hand in hand; at intervals large silent tears rolled down poor Fanny's cheeks, which more than once he kissed or wiped away: and he had wound a large scarf around her in such a manner that it supported the infant in her arms, and held it inextricably there. Caroline Smythe had been of the crouching, weeping party, though possibly too ignorant to be really conscious of their absolute peril; and sometimes she appealed to Rayton, as if his word were a fiat, or clung to his arm, as if there dwelt protection.

One disaster followed another, till the Falcon, like some noble animal maimed and shorn of its limbs, lay almost a helpless log upon the waters; and soon the catastrophe dreaded from the first was fatally realized. The ship struck upon the rocks, and the only hope of dear life rested with the boats. The crash of noises, cries, and prayers, and bursts of passionate agony, made up a scene of terror, such as sharers or witnesses have often attempted to describe.

"Quick—quick, Miss Seymour," said Rayton, approaching Helen and taking her by the arm, "there is not a moment to be lost—think not of property, let us save only ourselves."

"Let me," replied Helen (*us* she was nearly saying), "wait for the second boat—I can be of use here."

And she spoke truly;—she was of that great use which a calm and superior mind always is in swaying inferior natures. She was exhorting to composure and cheering with hopeful words a party of steerage passengers, who but for this influence might have added to the struggle and confusion around. At this moment, wild with terror, yet looking very beautiful nevertheless, Caroline Smythe rushed towards Mr. Rayton, and sank almost fainting into his outstretched arms. The profusion of her rich dark hair, which curled in natural

ringlets, fell over his shoulder, and, borne by the tempest-blast, streamed across his face. Helen Seymour looked up, but she met not his gaze; Rayton's eyes were fixed on the chiselled features of the deathlike countenance that almost touched his cheek. "Speed—speed," was the cry on every side, and, swayed by the "impulse of the moment," Francis Rayton placed Caroline in the boat, and, yielding to her murmured persuasion, stayed beside her!

Now seemingly ingulfed in the waters, then rising on the crest of a foaming billow, the first boat sped on towards the shore, while the second was rapidly filling with half-desperate fugitives. There was a general cry that the women should be saved first.

"My love—my life!" exclaimed Fanny Lawson, clinging to her husband with passionate agony; "swear to me that we shall not be parted; swear that you will not urge me to enter the boat if there be not room for both."

But for only answer, while he supported her with one arm, he pressed the other hand to his eyes, as if he dared not look upon her. "Come—come," said a sailor, attempting to lead her away; but Fanny had fainted, and Lawson, taking her in his arms, as if she had been a child, pressed a frantic kiss upon her motionless lips, and bore her away towards the boat. Like a bale of merchandize, was she passed from hand to hand, while Lawson flung himself upon the deck of the fast-filling ship, in the utter prostration of his agony. A sailor was assisting Helen Seymour to step across masses of cordage and fragments of various kinds; her countenance was of a deathlike paleness, and her lips were compressed by some firm determination. Yet, even in this hour of Life and Death, she stooped to pick up an object which had rolled towards her feet: it was Francis Rayton's cameo ring, which must have dropped from his finger.

"Lawson!—come—quickly," said Helen, speaking rapidly, yet with wonderful calmness. Then, as they approached the edge of the vessel, and addressing the crew, who were only waiting for her, she continued: "I yield my place to James Lawson;—let not two loving hearts be parted."

There was a hush of wonder and admiration, even amid the terror of the moment; but events might have changed their course, had not Fanny recovered her senses, and seeing only that her husband hesitated joining the fugitives, without comprehending why, she stepped on the edge of the boat with the gesture of one who would fling herself from it. By an instinct rather than a process of reasoning, her husband stretched towards her, and, falling back, she drew him after her.

"Do not grieve for me," said Helen Seymour, as the boat was loosened from the wreck, and—for the tempest had lulled—her clear tones were heard distinctly. "Do not grieve—there is still a chance of rescue for me; but if I die, I do so willingly. Yesterday Life was precious—to-day, it is valueless."

Alas! the one remaining chance was desperate; as, indeed, her generous heart foreboded. The last and smallest boat was not sea-worthy; it filled and went down even in the attempt to launch it. Some three or four sailors still remained on the wreck, and warmed to self-sacrifice by Helen's example, they tried to construct a raft for her security, but materials were wanting, and, with blank countenances, they gave up the attempt in despair. "Waste not time and strength for me, my friends," said Helen, in a clear low tone; "you are strong swimmers, and have a chance of life. For me it is the Death Hour; and though Death comes with few terrors, I would meet it alone—in silent, prayerful thought. It is sweet to know the father is not torn from wife and child—

three human beings made happy." And while she spoke she wreathed one arm round so much of the shivered mast as remained, as if she had taken her final stand in the sinking ship. One of the sailors clung to her hand, and kissed it, swearing it were best to die with her, and seek her angel intercession at the gates of heaven; and another implored her to trust to his strong arm, that should struggle with her towards the shore.

"No life shall be risked in saving mine," she said, firmly; and indeed the few minutes which had remained for parley were soon over, and as each, by the strong instinct of self-preservation, sought some stay among the floating spars around, the last object they beheld was Helen's white dress and upturned countenance, as she sank, without a struggle, into the deep waters.

No matter how the boats careered landward, and the strong swimmers reached the shore with life—a trembling, grateful band uplifted their souls in praise and thanksgiving.

Helen's corse was washed to the beech with the next flow of the tide; that form which had enshrined, perhaps, a greater heart than dwelt among the rescued. Her action—her words had been repeated from mouth to mouth; and many were the tears shed around her—many the kisses pressed upon her pale cheek and brow. Fanny Lawson flung herself beside the body in an attitude of worship; and her husband's lip quivered with manly emotion. Even the child was made to kiss the dead, and a strange hope indulged that it might remember the scene. Francis Rayton had requested that he might look upon her remains—alone.

He entered the shaded chamber, where she lay in white garments, her rich light hair, still dank from the ocean baptism, parted from the forehead, and reaching in long lines



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below her waist. Her countenance bore an expression of angelic serenity; and she looked young—oh, so much younger than when swayed by the hopes and the fears and the passions of life! On her finger still rested the emerald ring, but next to her hand, and guarded *by* that precious memento, was Rayton's cameo, evidently in the death hour yet more dearly cherished. Rayton had not shed tears since boyhood, but as he gazed he burst into a passion of weeping; then, when something like calmness was restored, he drew away the emerald, and placed it on his own finger. To the authorities he intimated that he would pay to her representatives any price which might be set upon it; and requested that the cameo might not be removed from the dead. No one disputed his right to direct; and by his order a monument of white marble has been erected above that African grave, bearing the simple inscription:

"TO THE MEMORY OF A MOST NOBLE WOMAN."

Rayton did not proceed to Calcutta in the same vessel which conveyed the remainder of the passengers; it would seem, indeed, that he purposely avoided their companionship. He returned to England as speedily as possible; is still unmarried—immersed in politics and speculations. Once, when a most dear friend questioned him on his mode of life, he answered bitterly, slightly transposing a glorious line from Tennyson's passion-kindled poem:

"'I must mix myself with Action, lest I wither by Despair!'"

FORGIVENESS.

A TALE.

BY DINAH MARIA MULOCK.

"NEVERTHELESS, in spite of your prejudices, Marion, I am sure you will like cousin Oliver when you see him."

The young girl to whom these words were addressed shook her head, in doubtful reply.

"You do not know how agreeable he is," pursued her companion, a tall and rather stately-looking young man, whose scarcely handsome but pleasing face bore the firmness and composed aspect of eight-and-twenty years. "It is really quite impossible not to like him."

"We shall see," said Marion, smiling.

The two whose short conversation we have quoted were walking slowly up and down the walks of a lovely garden. High walls shut out everything but the tops of surrounding trees, so that, but for the indistinct rumble of wheels, and the various sounds that now and then came from the great city of cities, this place might have been in some far-distant country solitude. Trees bending with ripe apples, peaches glowing amidst their green shelter, and one rich, full-leaved, ripe-fruited mulberry tree, adorned the garden; while, climbing over the old-fashioned house, the fragrant clematis —Moore's "night-blooming cereus," of sweet memory— shook down its perfumed shower of white blossoms, and allured the few wandering bees of autumn.

In this beautiful garden strolled the two lovers—for, that

such they were was evident from the young man's earnest, almost whispering tone, which no man ever uses save to the woman he loves, or pretends to love. And Marion, too, in her answers, pronounced his name—the common but ever sweet name of William—with that lingering, loving intonation, which makes even a less pleasant word sound beautiful, when falling from affectionate lips.

William Blair's affianced wife was much younger than himself—at the least, ten years. He had known her all her life; had fondled her on his knee when an infant, had watched the fairy-like, graceful child grow up into the beautiful girl, until he could hardly tell the period when his affection for his pet and play-fellow changed into his love for the woman whom he wished to make his companion for life. And William Blair did not woo in vain: it would have been strange if he had, for the high qualities of his mind, and his pleasing looks and manner, were calculated to win any girl's heart—even one so light, almost thoughtless, as that of Marion Hilliard, the spoiled child of a widowed father. Hers was that pliable nature which, under the guidance of a firm and noble character, might be moulded to any good; and therefore it was well for her—and even her father felt it so—that she was, in early youth, bound by such ties, to a man like William Blair.

Mr. Hilliard and his only daughter lived in the retired suburban cottage we have spoken of; seeing little society; for the old naval officer was averse to much company, and only cared to see William Blair, who came, as might be expected, almost daily. Marion might have regretted this seclusion; but her heart and thought were too full of her lover, to care, at the time, for any society but his. Therefore, when he told her of this cousin Oliver, his old schoolfellow, who was coming on a visit to him, Marion felt rather

jealous of any one who would possibly take William's thoughts and time away from her, than pleased at the prospect of seeing a new face.

The young people continued their walk up and down the garden, and then rested in the little summer-house. William again referred to his cousin—spoke of his talents, his brilliant conversation—and vainly strove to alter Marion's prejudice against him. The young girl laughed at his earnestness.

"You might be pleading at that disagreeable Chancery-court, where you have learned to be so grave, and to argue so well, William," said she. But, suddenly becoming serious, Marion lifted, with her slender and light finger, one of the thick chestnut curls from her lover's forehead, discovering a deep scar under the beautiful hair, of which, to tell the truth, William was a little vain.

"This alone," said Marion, "would be enough to prevent my ever liking the one who did it, and did it wilfully, too."

"But that was so long ago—we were only boys; Oliver was hasty and passionate, and could not endure any one who surpassed him. I believe he was sorry for it afterwards."

"That may be, but the sin remains."

"No, Marion; for I have years since forgotten it, and forgiven Oliver."

"That is because you are so good; and I will try to do the same; but, I fear, I shall never shake hands with him without thinking how nearly the stone that hand threw might have cost your life. And then I should not have been so happy as I am now, William," added the girl, in a low voice.

What lover could resist such arguments? William Blair forgot cousin Oliver, his sins and his perfections, and only thought of Marion—his own beautiful and betrothed Marion.

Oliver Chadwick came, and was introduced by William to

his intended bride and her father. It is true, Marion's pretty little hand did shrink at first from the touch of one she thought laden with the heavy sin of having once nearly killed her lover; but she soon forgot her horror, in the charm of young Chadwick's society. Cousin Oliver fully bore out William Blair's description of him—a rare circumstance, when a stranger has been much talked about beforehand. He was a strikingly handsome young man: his statue-like and faultless features were set off by a clear, dark, Italian complexion, and hair of that perfect jetty hue so rarely seen; beside which, the dark-brown, and dusky, and brownish-black tresses, which are politely termed black, sink into insignificance. In figure Oliver was much less tall than his cousin, and slighter made; but in exact proportion. His manners, too, were more courtly and insinuating: he was ever on the watch to perform some trifling act of polite attention, of which the higher and more manly nature of William Blair never thought. Yet these attentions came so naturally, and were so equally distributed, that no one could say Oliver showed Marion anything but the courtesy due to his cousin elect.

William's upright, honest mind, felt not the slightest jealousy of Oliver's superior personal attractions. He suffered him to lead the conversation, and gradually to draw out Marion, until she listened with pleasure, and talked without reserve, before him. Many clever men have a faculty for hiding their talents, but Oliver Chadwick's were all of the brilliant kind. His conversation was most fascinating: not from his being one of those talkers who pour out one dazzling stream, and keep others admiring listeners, but because, by consummate skill, which seemed like intuition, he encouraged the timid, and showed deference to the reserved, until all were set at ease, so as to take part in what was said, and all

invariably went away wondering, yet pleased, at their own courage, and charmed with him who had produced such effects.

There must have been a mist over William Blair's eyes, when he could not see how dangerous might be the result of these all-fascinating powers on a young and romantic spirit like Marion's. But he had such entire trust in her love for himself, and thought so highly of his cousin, that he never suspected Oliver could be guilty of any but brotherly admiration for the girl who was to be his cousin's wife. And the idea that Marion should think of Oliver, except in this sisterly way, never once crossed his mind. We acknowledge that such unsuspecting confidence is rare—very rare; but it is from weak and changing love that jealousy springs; perfect love knows no distrust: and such love was William Blair's for his Marion.

Thus, even when, following his profession as a barrister, he set off on the circuit—his first parting from Marion since they had been declared lovers— William felt not the slightest regret that Oliver Chadwick still lingered in the neighbourhood, but was rather glad that Marion and her father would occasionally have a visitor to enliven their dulness in his own absence. Marion's feelings it would be impossible to analyze: they were so contradictory, she hardly could understand them herself. She wept at parting with her lover: it might be with grief—it might be with a feeling of self-reproach at her waning affection for him; and then Oliver came, and read to her, and talked with her—talked about William, too—until her conscience was soothed, and her heart lightened.

A few weeks passed on, and Marion grew alarmed at her own feelings. She said to herself that she loved William still; but when she laid her head on her pillow at night—

that moment when, whatever may have been the wanderings of the day, the heart and the thoughts always fly to what is nearest and dearest—then, it was not the face of her betrothed, but of his cousin, that rose up before her; and her lips murmured the name, not of William, but Oliver.

It is ever sad to trace the change of a faithless heart. One would fain believe that love can never change—never grow old; and yet, alas! for frail human nature, it does both; but not with all. Let us at once come to the truth—that, long before William's return, his place in Marion's heart was given to Oliver. Silently, slowly, and by means which he well knew how to employ, Chadwick had stolen away the young girl's affection from her first love. To do the young man justice, however, he did not commit this wilful and great sin, as many do, idly, to gratify his own vanity. When he first saw Marion, and for some time after, he would have shrank from the accusation that he intended winning her heart. But yet, when he felt his own weakness, and knew that her beauty and gentle ways were stealing away the duty he owed to his cousin, he did not fly from the temptation, which soon became irresistible, until Oliver resolved that, at all risks, could he succeed in gaining her, Marion should be not his cousin's wife, but his own. For the time, Oliver was sincere in his love; but he did not think that faith, once broken, may be broken again, and that a fickle heart is of little value.

From his childhood Oliver Chadwick had never controlled himself, or been controlled by another. This, with an ambitious spirit, which could not brook to be outdone by any one, had caused his first sin against his cousin, the mark of which William would bear all his life. This, too, caused the second and more grievous offence against William's peace. That his cousin would suffer through his fault, Oliver never thought; or if he did, he judged of William's love by

his own, which had changed so often and so easily, that he hardly believed in constancy at all.

With these arguments, Oliver quieted his own self-reproaches and those of Marion; while, amidst all this, both so effectually shielded their love from every eye, except those of each other, that the old father never guessed the truth. Sin, like sorrow, never comes alone. The day before William Blair's appointed return, the once dutiful and affectionate Marion secretly left her father's house, and became the wife of Oliver Chadwick.

William Blair returned to a desolate home. No tidings of Marion's flight could reach him, and to the very last her letters to him had been continued; to such a degree had guileful influence worked upon her once innocent heart. He entered the cottage full of hope and happiness, and left it a broken-hearted man. Yet, William's own sorrows did not make him insensible to the anguish of the father of his lost Marion. The grey-haired old man sat continually gazing at his daughter's vacant seat, bowed down to the earth with grief. Self-reproaches, too, mingled with his sorrow; he implored William's pardon for not having better kept his treasure—for having suffered a stranger to steal it away. William felt no anger towards the desolate old man, but strove to lessen his anguish by cheering words. He spoke of Oliver's worldly prospects; that, though poor, Marion would not be destitute, and then her husband's great talents would make their way.

Mr. Hilliard looked at the generous young man with astonishment.

"How can you talk in this kind way, William? Have you no anger towards them?—have you forgotten your own wrongs?"

William turned his head away; but the quick heaving

of his chest, and the convulsive clench of his hands, told how intense were his sufferings. The old man watched him almost in fear; until he grew calmer, and said in a suppressed tone—

"I have forgiven Oliver once already, and shall I not forgive poor Marion, whom I so dearly loved—God help me! I must not say *love*, now. I have no anger against *her*."

"But your cousin?"

"Must I not forgive Marion's *husband?*" The words came forcibly from William's lips; his heart failed him in the utterance, and a spasm passed over his features. The old man took both his hands, saying, with deep feeling,

"William, my son—in heart at least—you are worthier than I."

Years passed on, and Marion's flight and marriage were forgotten. One visit only she had paid to her old home and her father; it was a few months after her marriage, just before she went abroad with her husband, who had obtained an appointment in the colonies. Marion, tearful and contrite, received her father's blessing; but she came alone, and spoke little of her husband. She did not see or ask for William Blair. From that time her letters came occasionally, until Mr. Hilliard died, and then no more was heard of Marion or Oliver.

Now, we know well that, according to the general rule in stories like this, the wronged and forsaken lover ought never to forget his early attachment, but to live and die devoted to its sad memory. Yet in real life it is not so. The bitterest heart-sorrow, if hopeless, is not beyond the influence of time's healing hand; and a loss which death or any other cause has made irremediable, is, after the lapse of a few years, forgotten, or at least remembered without pain. It is uncertainty, and the mingling of still-lingering

hope in the bitter cup, which make it so hard to be borne, and which keep the wound from healing.

Thus, when Marion's union with Oliver had for ever parted her from himself, William's heart grew in time less full of anguish. To the utter hopelessness of his love was added the conviction of the unworthiness of its object; and this feeling contributed to restore his peace. A virtuous heart cannot long feel love when esteem has fled. And yet, though his grief was healed, William did not entirely forget Marion. He thought of her with sorrow and pity—but she was his idol no longer.

After many years, when he had reached middle age, William Blair married. The wife he chose was most unlike Marion. She was not beautiful, scarcely even pretty; but her fine mind and gentle spirit invested even an unworthy exterior with their own purity and loveliness. There was little romance in the attachment between William Blair and his wife—all that had passed away with the bloom of their youth; for she too had loved before, and vainly; still there was a strong, calm, trusting affection between the husband and wife, which made their present life happy, and caused them to look forward to a peaceful, loveful old age. Two children enlivened their home, and bound them still more together, until both looked on their first love as a morning cloud.

"I have had a visitor to-day—a stranger," said Mrs. Blair, when her husband returned one winter evening to his cheerful home, and they were sitting together in that pleasant hour between dinner and tea, when idleness and confidential talk seem to come naturally.

"Indeed," said William, putting his feet on the fender, an act which brought no frown to his wife's brow. "Indeed—was it a lady or gentleman?"

"A gentleman—but one very young—a beautiful boy about ten years old; he would not go away without seeing you—and so I went down and spoke to him. He said his name was Henry Chadwick, and his mother wanted to see a Mr. Blair who lived here. I thought it strange; but then I remembered your mother's maiden name was Chadwick, so it might be some relation; and the boy seemed so resolute, that I asked where his mother lived, and promised that you should go."

While Mrs. Blair explained this, the flickering fire had sunk into red embers, or she would have seen how William's countenance changed as she spoke. But even had she read his thoughts, there was nothing there to give a single pain to the wife's heart.

"I think it must be a relative, Emma," he said. "I had a cousin abroad, whom I had lost sight of for many years. I will go and see."

"Do, William; the place is not far, and you may be of use to them. The boy was thinly clad, poor fellow; and when I gave him some cake he ate as if he were very hungry, so I made him carry it home."

"You are always good, my dear Emma," said William, taking his wife's hand affectionately.

The same night, cold and snowy as it was, William Blair set forth on his errand, for his heart told him that the boy's mother was no other than Marion. He knocked at the door of the room to which he was directed, but there was no answer, and he walked in. It was a desolate apartment; the snow flakes, piled up on the sill of the curtainless window, made more visible the blackness within, for the fire had gone out, and the one candle was flickering with its long wick untouched. On a bed, in one corner, lay a woman asleep, and at her feet a boy, also in deep slumber. They had drawn about them

the few garments they had, poor souls! striving to forget their coldness and weariness in sleep.

William Blair stepped lightly forward, and once more looked upon the face of his Marion. Changed, mournfully changed it was—but it was still Marion. The close widow's cap, which made her sharpened features look still more hollow, told her tale. Oliver was no more; and if there had been any resentment in William's heart, it would now have been cherished against the dead. Marion's thin hand lay among her boy's bright curls, who looked in his quiet child-like sleep so like what his mother once was, that William could have wept over him. But Marion herself—the bright red spot on her cheek, and her painful, audible breathing as she slept, told that it would not be long before the child was motherless. After awhile the boy moved, and spoke indistinctly; and William retired a step lest he should startle him. Henry awoke and saw the stranger.

"Are you the gentleman whom I asked to come and see my mother?" cried the boy at once.

Mr. Blair put his finger on his lips to silence the child, but Marion was already half aroused.

"Who are you talking to, Henry?" she said feebly.

"To Mr. Blair, mother, the gentleman you said I must go to if you were very ill; and I went this morning, only you did not know it."

"Is he here—is William Blair here?" almost shrieked Marion, raising herself on her elbow.

William advanced, and took her hand without a word. And thus met the two who had once so fondly loved each other—the same face was before their eyes—the same voice fell on their ears—but the life of love was gone—for ever. Marion looked long and fixedly at her former lover, and then burst into tears.

"Have you forgiven me?" she said. "How kind of you to come to me!"

"You have a right to my kindness," answered William, in a gentle and soothing tone. "You are my cousin—why did not Mrs. Chadwick send for me before?"

"Oh! do not call me so—call me Marion—let me forget everything but old times. And my father—my poor father—to see you makes me think of him!" cried the sick woman in passionate grief.

William calmed her with kind words, and her boy clung round her neck caressingly, until Marion's excitement passed away, and she was able to talk of the past and present. She spoke of her husband's death without tears; letting fall no reproach or complaint. Yet William needed no explanation to guess that Oliver's death was a blessing. And now she had come home, feeling that the mortal arrow was fixed in her own heart, to leave her boy with those who knew his mother. She had learned William Blair's after-history, and guessing from the letter he wrote to her on her father's death that he felt no anger against her, had told her child to go to him as their only friend.

William talked of removing her to a better home, where she would be more carefully attended to.

"No," said Marion, and a flush of lingering pride came across her brow. "I am not so poor as that—I have enough to last my poor remnant of life; but promise me to take care of my Henry."

"I will," said William, earnestly. "And now I must think of you. Emma—that is, my wife—shall come to see you to-morrow."

Marion shrank from this proposal.—"But what will she think of me?—does she know——"

"She knows nothing—shall know nothing—except that

you are my cousin. And now farewell; forget all the past, except that I was once your friend—your father's friend, Marion." And William kissed with brotherly regard the hand that was held out to him; spoke affectionately to the child, and went away to his own home.

He kept his promise; and it was not until years after, when Marion's beauty was long mingled with the dust, that William Blair told his gentle wife of the ties which had once bound her to him. And Mrs. Blair's sweet and compassionate nature regretted not for a moment, but rejoiced, that her cares had soothed the dying moments of the woman her husband had once loved. And when she saw how tenderly and fatherly he reared up to manhood the son of Oliver and Marion, making no difference between Henry Chadwick and his own children, the wife felt not one jealous pang, but rather loved and revered the more the noble nature which had been wronged so sorely, and which had forgotten and forgiven so much.

LA RUE DES LOMBARDS, À PARIS.

BY THE CHEVALIER DE CHATELAIN.

We rarely hear the name of a street mentioned, any more than that of a person, without involuntarily seeking to find some analogy between the place or the individual, and its, or his, appellation. I don't know whether other people see the matter in the same light that I do, but when, for instance, I hear of Mr. Tallboys, Mr. Strong, Mr. Lord, or Mr. King, I feel disappointed if Mr. Tallboys turns out to be a very little man, Mr. Strong a weakly subject, and Mr. Lord and Mr. King to have nothing gentlemanly about them, either physically or morally; in like manner, when Paradise-row turns out to be anything but Eden-like in its attributes, Prince's-street to be most unroyally shabby, New-street to be older than most of its neighbours, the Poultry to be as unlike a farm-yard as any object in the creation, Hill-street to be quite flat, and St. Martin's-in-the-fields to be in the middle of houses, I launch out into the most merciless abuse of the "powers that be," who either from apathy or from contempt of truth, allow our imaginations to run riot in all the luxury of anticipation, in order to be hurled into an abyss of squalidness and filth. The *Rue des Lombards,* in Paris, is among the number of those which deserve to come under this species of censure. Situated in one of the most populous quarters of ancient Paris, one expects, on the faith of its name, to find it swarming with those establishments designated in London by three golden balls, but which in France hide their diminished heads during the day in the shade of some dark alley, and only become

visible at night by the light of a shabby lantern, and under the specious name of *Mont de Piété*, are the receptacles where, under the sanction of the same moral government that has suppressed lotteries but allows the Stock Exchange, the grossest extortion is practised on the poor, who borrow money on a few miserable rags at the exorbitant and usurious rate of nearly thirty per cent. per annum. And, as in the middle ages, it was in fact the Lombards who were first authorized to lend money upon pledge, I concluded that it was in memory of those arch-usurers that such a name had been inflicted upon the said street. By dint, however, of minute researches in an old book, which has become a sort of heir-loom in my family (entitled *La Truanderie, ou l'Art de Gueuser*), and which I verily believe is not to be met with in the *Bibliothèque Royale*, I have been enabled to recognize the fallacy of any such speculations, and I fancy that I shall deserve well of all amateurs of antiquity, who delight in investigating the remains of ancient Paris, by presenting them with the fruits of my gleanings from various ancient tomes.

Be it known then unto you, gentle reader, that these Lombards, of the *Rue des Lombards* (which ought more correctly to have been called *La Rue des Frères Lombards*), were two twin-brothers of this name, so exactly alike in features, that it was next to impossible to distinguish one from the other. Both inhabited the same house, or rather the same mansion, for in those days this was one of the best neighbourhoods of Paris, and both were equally the object of universal veneration; and indeed there was not a tale of distress that came to their ears but what met with ready sympathy at their hands—nor was any calamity too sweeping for their prompt and efficacious relief. The only thing that appeared strange about them was, that, notwithstanding the daily and munificent alms they bestowed on all the needy that applied to them, the source of

their riches, far from being exhausted, appeared, on the contrary, to increase daily, as though they had been possessors of Fortunatus's purse, or Baron Kellerman's red nightcap. But the good folks of those times gladly recognized the finger of God in all such effects without apparent cause; for was it not natural that Providence should heap its favours on these two young men, who proved by the noble use they made of their riches, that they were most worthy to be entrusted with them? Besides this, every Sunday, or holiday, they might be seen at church, edifying the faithful by their meek and proper behaviour; and, moreover, sundry pious foundations had sufficiently testified their zeal and respect for the ministers of public worship. The reader will, doubtless, inquire by what secret these brothers found means to increase their fortune. Various rumours were afloat on the subject. Some thought they had discovered the philosopher's stone, others hinted at a certain compact signed and sealed with the arch-fiend himself, until this sinister rumour had been peremptorily silenced by their regular attendance, every Sunday, at their parish church of St. Médéric (or St. Merry, as it is now called). Nothing of this kind, however, was the case; but every day, or rather every evening, an hour after the curfew had sounded, after disguising themselves beyond the power of recognition, and covering their faces with a mask, the two brothers proceeded through a subterraneous passage to the charnel-house of the Innocents—in those days the haunt of all the adventurers, thieves, and beggars, that infested the capital. The exit to this vault was an isolated tomb, which the "rabble rout," who flocked in swarms to the cemetery each night, never ventured to approach from superstitious fears. On reaching the charnel-house, the two brothers, who passed for one and the same person in the eyes of the bandits, separated, and each went to place himself at the head of a

troop of robbers, one on one side of the cemetery, the other on the other. From thence these troops, composed of the same number of men, and having the same watchword, spread themselves all over Paris, whose inhabitants were fast asleep, knocking down the patrol, scaling walls, and carrying fire and sword into the most opposite points of the town. Long before the first dawn of morning, the two brothers had returned to the charnel-house, and reached the isolated tomb, and from thence the quiet refuge of their peaceful mansion. The police were completely at fault, and, as usual, they searched everywhere rather than in the right place, and never dreamt of the cemetery of the Innocents as a receptacle for thieves; especially as the latter had always the extreme precaution to surround the holy spot with a halo of superstitious terrors, and, moreover, to avoid levying black mail on any of the quiet citizens of the neighbourhood, if once in a way they happened to be abroad at undue hours.

Several years passed by, when one Sunday, at mass, the attention of one of the brothers happened to be attracted by a young maiden of faultless beauty. He had no sooner set eyes upon her than he became violently in love, and being himself a handsome-looking cavalier, he had soon the happiness to find that his passion was reciprocated. Isabelle was the only daughter of the Prévot of Paris. The latter, a very proud and important sort of personage, chose to look upon young Lombard's suit as a piece of impertinence, refused his consent to so unequal a match, and ejected the gallant in a kind of manner that plainly showed it was of no use attempting to soften his stubborn will. The lover, therefore, after holding council with his brother, determined to carry Isabelle off to some foreign land, after having first disposed of their immense possessions. A complete success attended their plan. They began by converting their gold into ingots, and sending

these off to Italy, then, one day they caused a secret advice to be given to the prévot of a plan for attacking and rifling the convent of the *Dames de St. Chaumont,* situated at one end of the Paris of those times,* that same night; the robbers, according to this anonymous warning, were to carry off a young niece of the prévot, and a large sum of money, which had been that morning received by the *Dames de St. Chaumont.* The prévot caught at the bait. In the course of the day he despatched his troop of archers to the spot mentioned, sending them one by one, and under various disguises, to avoid suspicion, and manned all the avenues to the convent; lastly, he repaired to the scene of danger, where he put himself at the head of a tolerable-sized troop, which he had introduced with the utmost secrecy into the sacred building, and calmly awaited the attack of the robbers, whom he hoped to surprise and seize to a man; but he had reckoned without his host; for while he was busy with his warlike preparations, the robbers, instead of making the community of the *Dames de St. Chaumont* the theatre of their exploit, went, with one of the two brothers at their head, to lay siege to the prévot's house, unprotected at that moment by its usual guard; and in the inevitable disorder occasioned by this sudden attack, the other brother carried off his mistress without even drawing his sword, and took flight with her while the robbers pillaged the prévot's house, and stole everything that could be stolen. A few days after this event, the brother who had remained in Paris joined the fugitive and his beautiful partner in Italy, and all three set off for Sicily, where their enormous wealth, the source of which ever remained a secret to Isabelle, enabled them to live in the most luxurious and delightful manner.

Meantime the two bands of robbers, composed of the refuse

* This convent was situated on the spot on which the *Rue de Tracy* now stands, between the *Rue du Ponceau* and the *Rue des Filles Dieu.*

of society that infested the cemetery of the Innocents, were each expecting the return of their invincible and valiant chief —but night after night followed, and their hopes were still frustrated; on the other hand, the mansion in the *Avenue des Charniers* (for such was the former name of the *Rue des Lombards*) was silent and deserted; the servants had been all dismissed, as their masters had set out on a long journey; and as to the good city of Paris itself, it appeared, ever since the audacious and successful attack on the prévot's house, to have recovered its long-lost tranquillity, as if by magic; the prévot alone was put out, and vainly sought for his daughter's ravisher, whom, of course, he was unable to find, seeing that the communications were not quite so easy then as now-a-days, and that the man who would have been bold enough to prophesy the invention of the post, of telegraphs, or of railroads, would have been treated as a sorcerer, or a maniac. No wonder then that days succeeded to days, months to months, and years to years, without the prévot's hearing any news of his daughter, the bandits of their chiefs, or the mansion of the charnel-house recovering its former inhabitants. It happened at last that an adjoining house, having caught fire, it became necessary, in order to stop the progress of the flames, to force an entry into the deserted dwelling. Here was found, upon a bureau, a parchment document, all covered with dust, containing a donation, signed by the brothers Lombard, of the mansion, with all the tenements and dependencies, and all the furniture therein contained, to the poor. Accordingly, the mansion and all its appurtenances was sold by direction of the magistrates of the town, and the funds proceeding from the sale were appropriated to the poor, according to the benevolent intentions of the donors; and as at that time the *Avenue des Charniers* was very narrow, the city purchased the mansion, and caused it to be pulled down to widen the

public way, after having decided that the street, which should traverse the site of the mansion, should bear the name of the two benefactors of the poor, and be henceforth called the *Rue des Lombards.*

Now it happened that in filling up the cellars of the mansion, the attention of the workmen was arrested by the hollow sound produced by some stones rolling in a certain direction, and having cleared a space sufficient for investigating the cause of what they heard, they perceived a trap-door opening into a vault that led to the cemetery of the Innocents. Nothing, however, was found in the vault except two masks of polished steel, but covered with rust, of tolerable workmanship for the age, and exactly alike. Numerous were the conjectures built upon these barren data, while the real destination of the subterraneous passage remained an unsolved mystery. It was only a long time after that the last surviving Lombard, having retired into a convent in Sicily, on the death of his brother and the prévot's daughter, confessed, *in articulo mortis*, the whole story of the errors of his youth, as he called them, and bequeathed a considerable sum to the poor of the parish of St. Médéric, in Paris, while he left the surplus of his riches to the monks of the abbey where he ended his days, who were nothing loth to accept the legacy, notwithstanding the source it was derived from.

Since this epoch, so far removed from our days, the physiognomy of this portion of ancient Paris has undergone considerable changes. The cemetery of the Innocents, after having furnished the materials for one of the vast galleries of the catacombs, has made way for the *halle;* the beautiful fountain, due to the chisel of Jean Goujon, now raises its head on the spot where the vaulted tomb once stood; the *Avenue des Charniers* has likewise disappeared, and has been succeeded by the *Rue des Lombards*, which became the head-quarters of the dealers in

drugs and sweetmeats. Towards 1720, one Berger purchased the ground on which now stand numbers 46 and 48, and which formed a portion of the very site where stood formerly the subterranean passage of the Lombards. He there established the firm now famous throughout Europe under the title of *Le fidèle Berger*, which has the happy privilege of furnishing sweetmeats to all the courts of Europe, besides being the hereditary purveyor of the royal family of France, having the honour to number amongst its customers Louis XV., Louis XVI., Louis XVIII., and Charles X. It is the *fidèle Berger* that furnished the *dragées* for the christening of the King of Rome, and the Duke of Bordeaux, and all the illustrious families of the Empire and the Restoration; and even in these days of rapid improvements, it is still the *fidèle Berger* that maintains the superiority amongst his numerous rivals. Every year, when that day so dear to childhood, and even to the fair sex in general, that golden day known by the title of New Year's Day, comes round, it is a sight to see this bazaar of sweetmeats besieged by the eager crowds of customers. The visitors stand waiting for admittance, like at the doors of the French or Italian opera-houses. The police have no sinecure in repressing the incessant tumult of the mighty tide of human beings, ebbing and flowing like the surges of the ocean; scarcely are the carriages able to drive up to the entrance of this temple dedicated to sugar-plums, whither China, Persia, and Arabia, send their yearly tribute; the former of its rich tissues to enwrap these nectar-distilling sweetmeats in a fitting shrine, and the latter of its "Sabæan odours," to steep them in the most dainty aromas. It is said that at Athens the very herb-venders were able to distinguish, by his accent, the Athenian of pure blood from the native of all other Grecian cities; it is the same with the *dragées* of the *fidèle Berger*, and Brillat Savarin was of our opinion, the real amateur cannot be deceived on this head; moreover, the *fidèle*

Berger has a kind of claim to the good graces of all who wield a pen, and call themselves authors, for we cannot forget that the poet Gilbert, of unfortunate memory, began his literary career under its auspices. It was in writing devices for this firm, in which he held a very modest place, that he struck out the first spark of genius that subsequently blazed forth in all its glory, in his beautiful work entitled "*La Satire du Dix-huitième Siècle,*" and those yet more touching lines, instinct with such deep melancholy, beginning—

"Au banquet de la vie, infortuné convive,
J'apparus un jour, et je meurs ;
Je meurs, et sur la tombe où lentement j'arrive,
Nul ne viendra verser des pleurs !"

Poor Gilbert! alas, hadst thou been endowed with a less mighty genius, and above all with a soul less noble and less aspiring, France would indeed have numbered a great poet the less, but thou wouldst not have died miserably in a hospital, where many another unappreciated genius, like Hégésippe Moreau, of our own times, has fallen a victim to the apathy and selfishness of his fellow-creatures.

STANZAS.

BY LORD JOHN MANNERS.

I.

THE word has been spoken; my doom has been said,
And the dreams of long years are all broken, and fled.
The hopes which I cherished are shattered, and now
There's a weight on my heart, and a gloom on my brow.

II.

The earth in its brave summer's dress is most fair—
There is beauty around me, sweet strains in the air—
But that beauty I heed not, I shrink from the strain,
They remind me of her, whom I worship in vain.

III.

Like the wild flower which grows unperceived in the shade
Of the briars that encompass some green forest glade
My love had grown silently, noticed by none,
Till it burst from its lair, and was straightway undone.

IV.

Six winters, and summers, and springs, have gone by
Since thy low gentle voice, and thy dark piercing eye,
First taught my light spirit to feel, and to own
That an empress had won, and for ever—its throne.

V.

And though thou, in thy beauty, that throne may'st despise,
Nor grant my fond prayers, nor be moved by my sighs,
Yet in vain should I strive to reconquer that heart
Which henceforth from it's fealty can never depart.

VI.

Then, dearest, farewell!—at thy bidding I go
To brood in strange lands o'er my love, and my woe;
But never believe, though for years I may range,
That my heart can grow cold, or my love it can change.

THE CREVICE IN THE TOWER.

BY CHARLES HOWARD.

"He is with her; and they know that I know
Where they are—what they do. They believe my tears flow
While they laugh at me, mock at me, fled to the drear
Empty church, to pray God in for them . . . . *I am here.*"
BROWNING.

So many years have come and gone since the oldest shepherd could show where one stone of the Castle was left among the short grass, and so many changes have been made in the legend by the nurses who handed it down from generation to generation, that I am by no means sure if what I am going to tell you is true, or in part only, and the rest a dream.

All however agree, that in the very dark times, shortly after the foundations of the Castle were laid—times when the powers of Evil appeared on earth in bodily shape and presence—the old Bishop, who builded it for stronghold and retreat, after for many years maintaining hot conflicts with a Fiend who had pursued him, bound the same; cast him into a dungeon underground; closed the vault with a huge stone, sealed it with a seal, on which Bible words were graven; and, thus relieved from the terrors of his restless foe, raised donjon and battlement, and spacious banquetting-hall; reserving for his own especial abiding place, that tower, far deep beneath the foundations whereof the Demon lay chained. But let those who would bind the Wicked One for ever take heed of their own speech and deeds! They say, that my lord Bishop (let us hope that such Bishops are no more to be found!) loved

good cheer overmuch; and that, on the occasion of a high festival, being chafed at the absence of some dainty promised him, he was heard to utter angry words—if not, in truth, to swear. There was a moment's silence after he had spoken: and thus was distinctly heard a low sound, arising, as it were, from some fathomless depth, as, close at the Bishop's feet the pavement parted, and some one was heard to say—"Ha, ha, my Lord,—you have loosed my voice at all events!"

Great, you may imagine, was the awe of all who were by; and greater still their horror, when the Bishop turned slowly in his chair, as if to reply or rebuke the speaker, and paused—to move no more!—They thought he was merely fixed with the great fear of the moment. But he was dead!

The Castle passed into other hands: the wall and floor with their crevice (for the Bishop's tower joined the banquetting-room) must needs be repaired, since gay doings were to take place there; and who would believe the story of the grim Captive in the vault, seeing that none could find the mark of the seal or the holy words I have told you of? But though the most learned of builders, the most experienced of masons, might try ever so long, ever so patiently, with hewn stone, and mortar, and clasps of iron—there was no closing that crevice! Presently, it began to be bruited about, that mutterings and strange sounds were heard thence to proceed; until it was accepted and believed that so long as all went well, the Captive had no power to raise his voice, but that, did any inhabitant meditate an evil deed, the sound of mirthful talking was straightway heard, and sometimes the very form and circumstance of the crime related. Three evenings before Count Edgar and Count Claribert (twin brothers) fought for the wicked Lady Maude; the servants who passed the door of the banquetting-room, or crossed the little pleasaunce beneath the shadow of the Tower, declared that they heard angry



J. Nash

Frederick A. Heath

chidings, and something like the ringing of steel. Before Countess Adela, again, brought shame on the proud old escutcheon by her flight with the Jew, the laughter of scornful ladies, it is said, came up from the chasm. So, the end was, seeing that no craftsman could close the Mouth, which the Bishop's sinful words had opened, men gradually began to shun that side of the castle;—a new banquet-hall being built by the proud Earl Walter—and gardeners neglected the flower-plots beneath the walls of the Bishop's Tower. For who would not shrink back from his own ill thoughts or ill purposes spoken aloud?

Thus it fell out—so runs the tale—that many, many years had passed since that haunted place had been approached by mortal foot; till on the sweet summer afternoon when the young Countess Mildred ventured thitherward, with her bower-woman, the Italian girl. Was it that the young wife was so pure that she knew the Voice, constrained to utter but truth, had nought wherewith to reproach her?—so happy in her Lord's love and her own beauty, that she defied wreck and ruin?—so desperate in some secret care, that she longed to end its agony, and fathom the depths into which Sorrow must ere long plunge her?—or so tired of her flowers and birds, and of Laura's lute-tunes (her lord being absent), that she would fain accept fear itself for a new pleasure?

At all events, if *she* believed in the tales which had gathered round that crevice in the Tower, her attendant, it would seem, though a southern woman, wist not of them; for she nestled up close to the grey stones, and, taking her mandoline, began to sing.

Come, mine own! the night
Rest to all hath given,
Save the watchers bright
On the plains of Heaven;

Save to winds, whose tone
  Bears a friendly warning,
" *Fond ones, haste! begone!*
  It will soon be morning!"
Each forbidding eye
  Careless Sleep doth cover!
Come, mine own, and fly
  With thy gallant lover.

" My Lord's favourite ditty," murmured the Countess Mildred. " But it is not to anger me that she sings it! No:—not to anger me! If she *were* as subtle as they say, she would choose any other time rather."

" *They say*"—*Who* said?—*What?*—No one; nothing—save the restless spirit at Countess Mildred's own heart. Her Lord, assuredly, had not complained of the Italian girl as subtle. The lady thought he had given to *her*, and not to his young wife, that last bright look of his when he rode away to serve the King.

But, surely, there *was* an odd echo in that deserted spot;—a sound, it seemed, which kept measure with Laura's voice; and made it sound sweeter, deeper, more fascinating than ever. " If I could only sing thus!" flashed like a pang across Countess Mildred's mind;—" and my Lord so fond of the lute!—Go on, girl! I did not bid thee stop—If *they say* that I am jealous——"

" *They say*" again . . . *Who* said?—The Italian girl went on:—

In some vale, where hill
  Kindred hill is greeting,
And the golden rill
  Springs to mark their meeting:
Where no sound is heard
  Save of blossoms falling,
Or some hidden bird
  To her sisters calling;
Or the rush of leaves
  Which the sparkling river
On its bosom heaves,
  We will live for ever!

"Hush!" cried the Lady Mildred, starting almost violently. "Be silent—I want to listen—I will know what they are saying!"——

"*They are saying!*"—It was but one Voice which spoke, and that said—

Beware of the Poisoner!

"You heard!" almost screamed the Lady Mildred, starting to her feet.

"Sweet lady! there is nothing but the twittering of the martlets to hear!" And the Italian girl looked surprised and scared at the passionate gesture of her mistress; with the face, the while, of one who heard nothing.

"They said, she was apt at feigning!" muttered Lady Mildred to herself;—"and it is because I am not, that my Lord . . . . But I am subtle enough to guard *myself* against her poisons. Come, girl! let us go. It is dreary here!"

Days—months—a year! Doubtless ere summer came round again there must have been no lack of talking in the Bishop's Tower; so much had within a twelvemonth's compass grown, and blown, and ripened. Never seemed that warning Voice to be still for one instant with Lady Mildred. Every time that the Italian girl turned her head the Lady heard it in her ear. Every caress (and Laura had caressing ways) seemed to press it close into her heart! They were agreed, her Lord and her Bowerwoman; of that she might be sure. They were agreed! She must beware of her rival. She was too proud to complain. Remonstrance would be of no avail! But where and how was she to defend herself? She knew not rightly how deep her Lord and his Leman were in love! Who could tell her (for she was too proud to question menials or to keep spies, and would trust nobody) at what moment the latter might begin her dark practices! She had

heard of quick and slow poisons. Even now she felt ill and feverish, and shaken, and prematurely withering, as if a veil were betwixt her and the sun! If they were already at work! She had an old book of pharmacy at hand which would tell her .... Why, it seemed that a child who wrought in secret, and would strictly tell no one, might speedily and without disgrace disencumber himself of an enemy! *She* was no child. The Voice from the Tower had warned her. Should she wait till the wretches made her grow hideous, and bleached, and unlovely before her prime—a laughing-stock to all who had envied the Countess Mildred in her bloom? Should she be so weak-spirited, so mean? Would her patience avail her aught? No: she stood alone! nought! She would not wait! And those who had roused her should try which was the strongest. As for pity, as for fear—she *was* in Hell already!

It was not long after this that there was again high festival held in the Castle, on the anniversary of Countess Mildred's wedding-day. And to please some stranger-guests, he said, her Lord would have the Italian girl sing to her mandoline. Laura would have fain refused; her voice, she said, was weak. She knew not why, but she had forgotten all the songs she had learned. But, as is the way with the noble, the more she pleaded the more peremptory grew the Count, "My favourite ballad, if nothing else—at least, my favourite ballad!"

The girl began, but her pleading was not a false one; for, after putting her hand to her forehead—and some remarked both hand and brow to be strangely pale, and the latter damp—the best she could do was to sing the last verse in a melancholy and broken voice.

Come away!—the moon
  Lingers for our guiding,
Far behind us soon
  Shall be care and chiding

Love alone shall see
  Where we make our dwelling,
Calm, and blest, and free,
  Far beyond his telling.
Haste, while every eye
  Heavy Sleep doth cover,
Rise, mine own ! and fly
  With thy gallant lover !

"Fie ! that is but the last verse !" cried the Count, rising impatiently. He spoke more truly than he thought; for the music died on the poor girl's lips, and the lute dropped from her hands as she sunk fainting to the floor, at the feet of the Countess Mildred !

"Father !" gasped the ancient Lady, who, dying last of her race, called for a Priest to listen to her shrift, "as I hope for peace—*as I will have it*, in return for all I give, my lands, my wealth, and my jewels, to the Church—I was deceived. They told me that my lord and she were agreed; that she longed to reign in my stead; that she was preparing to compass my life—the Evil One deceived me. I should never have done it but for the Voice from the Crevice in the Tower."

"The echo of THINE own murderous thoughts, daughter !" was the Priest's reply. "Thou hast yet an instant ! Beware of taking thy poisons with thee before the judgment seat !"

AFTER THE BALL.

A BUFFO LYRIC.

BY ALBERT SMITH, ESQ.

The very last guest has departed,
  The lights have burnt into thin air;
The ball-room is dark and deserted,
  And silent again is the square.
The band, worn with playing and blowing,
  Are wishing Herr Kœnig good night,
And Gunter's assistants are going,
  Assured that their things are "all right."

The page in the study is lying
  Asleep, on the dining-room chairs,
The housemaids to slumber are trying,
  The butler is tipsy down stairs.
The love-birds, who long have been blinking,
  Quite scared by the music and light,
With all the canaries, are thinking
  At last, that it must be the night.

And She—the fair queen of the numbers,
  Who came to that beautiful ball,
P'rhaps thinks now of me, in her slumbers,
  And p'rhaps—horrid thought!—not at all.
In nights of such unalloy'd pleasure
  Why cannot existence be pass'd?
To spend years in a polka's gay measure,
  And die of a post-horn at last?

I think I produced an impression,
  Because, in the course of the night,
Whilst polking she made a confession—
  "She liked to be held rather tight."
And afterwards grown somewhat bolder,
  Too flutter'd and breathless to speak,
I felt her fair chin on my shoulder,
  And soft scented hair on my cheek.

When Vere coarsely said she was "stunning,"
  He wanted to be in my shoes.
She gave me a *deux temps* twice running,
  And threw over one of the Blues.
And then she got rid of her brother
  So well, when the supper-time came,
And said "We will keep by each other,"
  And, one time, our plate was the same!

She told me she loved lobster salad,
  And rode in the park every day,
And doted on Pischek's last ballad,
  And Tennyson's "Queen of the May."
And pull'd cracker *bonbons*, and flirted,
  And laugh'd when I made a bad pun,
And when all my wits I exerted,
  She said I was "capital fun!"

How dreadfully hot! I am tumbling,
  And tossing, and can't get to sleep;
And over the streets the dull rumbling
  Of wheels is beginning to creep.
And all round the room I see whirling
  The women and lights, like the wind;
And still I can hear, to their twirling,
  The "Olga" and "Bridal" and "Lind."

I wish I could marry. 'Tis shocking
My income will not carry two.
Oh dear! at my door there's a knocking,
And I have not slept the night through.
I must shake off all thoughts so entrancing,
And fag down that horrid Whitehall.
And so there's good-bye to romancing—
Adieu to the Belle of the Ball!

July, 1847.

LA MIA DIMÓRA.

BY ANNA SAVAGE.

The home I sigh for is no kindred dwelling,
Where eager eyes look wistfully for me,
Where hand meets hand, and hearts with rapture swelling,
Bid the long parted, the most loved one be.

Home!—smiling home!—the limes are o'er it drooping,
Yet, from its chambers, children stand aloof;
So low it lies, that thy kind hand in stooping,
Alone may touch its green and humble roof.

Home!—peaceful home! the grass doth grow around it;
For garden flowers—daisies blossom fair;
Narrow its walls—an arm's breadth well may bound it;
But sound of scorn or wrong can reach not there.

Oh! welcome home!—the exile gazing blindly
Through tears of tenderness, the loved to see,
Haileth his native shore with thoughts less kindly,
Than my poor heart looks hopefully to thee.

RED ROSE VILLA, AND ITS INHABITANTS.

A SKETCH.

BY GRACE AQUILAR.

AUTHOR OF "HOME INFLUENCE."

On the outskirts of a certain country town, which for euphony we will call Briarstone, from its being situated in one of the most picturesque, but least known parts of old England, and almost embedded in hills and lanes, where the wood or briar rose grew redundantly, was a certain castellated-looking mansion, glowing with red bricks and bright blue slates, storied with large-paned windows, framed with such fresh green, that it would seem as if the painter's brush could never have been absent above a month together. The entrance-door, of most aristocratic dimensions, was of bright glazed yellow, never sullied by dust or dimness. Below the portentous-looking circular knocker (Briarstone was yet in happy ignorance of the *un*-aristocracy of knockers) was a large brass plate, glittering in the sunshine like burning gold, and bearing thereon, in large and dignified letters, as if the name was of such importance in itself that it required no engraver's ornament, the monosyllables—portentous in their very brevity—Miss Brown. The gravel walk which led up to the imposing flight of steps (white as the most scrupulous care could make them) that the yellow door surmounted, was kept so particularly neat, that the very birds feared to alight upon it, lest they should be swept off for some intrusive leaf or twig, quicker even than their voluntary flight. It was impossible to look upon the exterior of the mansion without

being impressed with a grand idea of its as yet invisible interior.

Standing, as Red Rose Villa did, in a spacious garden, full ten minutes' walk out of the town, it was marvellous how the daily events of this said town became known within its walls, as if a train had been laid—a sort of electrical conductor—to the interior of every dwelling, which conveyed back to its starting-place all the information required. However invisible the *means* of communication, the *effects* were certain; for Miss Brown knew everything, even before the persons affected knew it themselves.

Now, Miss Brown, though her dignified name appeared on the brass plate solus, was not the sole inmate of this stately mansion by any means. She was, in fact, one of a multitude; for there were times when the capacious walls of Red Rose Villa enshrined no fewer than fifty living souls. The truth must out on our paper, though Miss Brown would have been shocked almost to annihilation had any one suggested the propriety of permitting it to speak on her cherished brass plate—Miss Brown kept a first-rate finishing academy for young ladies of the first families, and a boarding-house for all who needed kind friends, cheerful lodgings, and comfortable board. Then she had an English, and a French, and an Italian, and of course a German teacher—all exemplary young women. Masters were rarely admitted, it being a gross impropriety in Miss Brown's educational code, to accustom young ladies to male tuition.

One indeed there was, a Mr. Gilbert Givevoice; but then Miss Brown and his lamented mother had been such friends, that at one time they had thought of becoming another Miss Ponsonby and Lady Eleanor Butler, and causing a sensation by retiring to live on friendship; but, unfortunately, before this could be carried into effect, a Mr. Givevoice

appeared, and Miss Brown was left to mourn the inconsistency of those professions which had declared friendship all-sufficient for life. The offence was not forgiven for many years; but when Mrs. Givevoice was left a widow, Miss Brown generously relented, and Gilbert showing some musical talent (magnified by the Briarstonians into marvellous genius), he was gradually installed as music-master general, and aid extraordinary in all the concerns of Red Rose Villa.

Besides five-and-twenty pupils, a dozen boarders, four teachers, and half-a-dozen servants, Miss Brown was blessed with two brothers and two sisters, to all of whom she had performed most inimitably a mother's part. Many marvelled that such grown men as Mr. Gustavus, and Mr. Adolphus Brown, should so contentedly succumb to female domination, and not seek homes for themselves; but petticoat government was so supreme in Red Rose Villa, that even the hint of such a thing would have been far too great a stretch of masculine audacity; and, in fact, they were very well contented where they were. Mr. Adolphus was a banker's clerk, and was only known at home as going to sleep upon the sofa. Mr. Gustavus had been (according to his own account), at one time, a land-surveyor, at another, an architect, and then an engraver; but he was, he declared, one of the unlucky ones, and so quietly sunk down in his sister's establishment, as merely a domestic man, who could set his hand to anything. He taught writing and arithmetic, and oriental tinting, and lead tinting, and a variety of finishing accomplishments; and copied music, and invented patterns for all the young lady-boarders who were worth something more than smiles. Mr. Adolphus was always asleep. Mr. Gustavus never seemed to sleep at all: thin as a lath, he was here, there, and everywhere, busying himself in everybody's concerns, but never succeeding in forwarding his own.

Miss Brown, portly and majestic in carriage as of imperturbable gravity in look, possessed a fund of high-sounding, choice-worded, conversational powers—that is to say, her speech, once entered upon, flowed on in such a continuous gently-murmuring stream, that to break or interrupt it by a rejoinder was utterly impossible. The voice was as imperturbable and unvarying as the face. She was wondrously learned; schooled in the lore of the ancient, and wise in the ways of the modern world. No scheme could be set afloat at Briarstone unless Miss Brown had been consulted; no shop was the fashion unless Miss Brown patronized; no case of distress worth relieving, unless forwarded by Miss Brown; and, in sober truth, Miss Brown was benevolent—was generous—did the kindest deeds imaginable; but as she never left her pinnacle of ice to look into human hearts, lest their warmth should thaw hers, she received neither the regard nor esteem which her sterling qualities in reality merited. Miss Whilelmina Brown was her antipodes—all sweetness—all graciousness—all fascination! Miss Brown was learned, and not accomplished; Miss Whilelmina accomplished, and not learned. Miss Brown was all sobriety, Miss Whilelmina all smiles. At thirty, she learnt the harp; at five-and-thirty, the guitar; at forty, she discovered she had a voice, and could sing inimitably—all the Briarstone *soirées* said so, and of course it must be true. Whole scenes from the French tragedians—stanzas from Dante—long lines from Schiller—Miss Whilelmina would recite with such pathos, such expression, there was no occasion to understand the languages to enter into such charming recitations. English poetry was not ventured upon: Byron and Moore *were* charming, certainly; but then her sister's responsible position—she dared not admit them upon the drawing-room tables of Red Rose Villa—she could only indulge herself strictly in private.

Miss Angelica, the youngest of the family by some years, was different to either sister. Nature had not been very bountiful in the powers of the brain, but, in their stead, had endowed her with powers of housewifery in no common degree. She managed all the domestic concerns of this human Noah's ark as no one else could. From morning till night she was moving; so overlooking every department, that at the farthest sound of her footsteps (none of the lightest, for Miss Angelica was as short and stout as Miss Whilelmina was tall and languidly slim) every brush and broom seemed endowed with double velocity. Jingle, jingle, went a huge bunch of keys—pat, pat, her substantial feet, from kitchen to attic—scullery to roof. Even if she sat down, her fingers continued the same perpetual motion, in the creation of sundry caps, bonnets, head-dresses—all the paraphernalia of female elegancies. No one dressed so becomingly as the Misses Brown; and Miss Angelica was considered the originator and inventor of fashions which all Briarstone followed.

The pupils were like most misses in their teens. Originality of character always succumbed to system in Red Rose Villa. Miss Brown's was a finishing academy for manners as well as morals; and so in the weekly *soirées* of her mansion, the young ladies, by alternate eights, appeared in the drawing-room, dressed very becomingly, to sit down and smile, and answer in monosyllables; to play their last specimen of Herz or Thalberg, or sing their last bravura, or make one in a quadrille; but in all they did to bear witness to the admirable code of tuition and government carried out in Red Rose Villa.

The boarders presented a variety of characters; but as our sketch only extends over one evening, we can merely mention them generally. Officers' widows, on half-pay, who, by a

residence in Miss Brown's establishment, combined first-rate education for their daughters, and society for themselves; ancient spinsters, who had not given up the idea of becoming middle-aged matrons, well knowing that Miss Brown's philanthropic disposition gave them opportunities for the cultivation of the tender passion, when any one else would have imagined the time for such juvenilities was over. In the fortnightly *soirées*, one, two, or three pairs of lovers were always found among Miss Brown's guests — unfortunates, whose interminable engagements, from pecuniary difficulties, or the stern dissent of cruel guardians, would have seemed hopeless to all, but for the energetic encouragement of the benevolent Miss Brown, who always acted on the idea

"Passion, I see, is catching."

And, still more urgent reason, never did a wedding-party issue from the well-glazed portals of Red Rose Villa (and such events did really occur) but an accession of pupils and boarders immediately followed.

Amongst the boarders were two young ladies, sisters' children, and both orphans, but the similitude went no further. Isabel Morland, the eldest by two years, was a sparkling brunette—satirical—clever; eccentric in habits, uneven in temper, and capricious as the wind. But what did all this signify? She was an heiress; and, reckoning according to the estimation of Briarstone, a rich one. She had been a pupil, and her love of display, and coquetry, and determination to get a husband, had occasioned her resolve to remain with a family whom in heart she detested, rather than reside with the only relations she possessed, old respectable folks in the country. She had sense enough to know that her fortune, inexhaustible as it seemed in Briarstone, would not endow her with the smallest consequence else-

where. And though so highly gifted by nature as, had she selected the society of superior minds, to have become both estimable and happy; yet her love of power—of feeling herself superior to any one with whom she associated—made her voluntarily become a member of a family whom she lost no opportunity of turning into objects of satire and abuse; receiving the marked attentions of Mr. Gustavus Brown so graciously, when no better offered, as to give him every hope of ultimate success; but cold, distant, and disdainful, at the remotest chance of achieving a more desirable conquest.

Very different was Laura Gascoigne. Unusually retiring in manner, the peculiar charm hovering around her could better be felt than described. Possessing neither the wit nor the cleverness, or, as Coleridge so happily expresses it, "the brain in the hand," which characterized her cousin, she had judgment, feeling, thought—the rare power of *concentration*, which enabled her to succeed in all she attempted—the quiet, persevering energy which leads to completion, even in the simplest trifles, and prevents all mere superficial acquirement. Perhaps early sorrow had deepened natural characteristics. From the time her mother became widowed, no pen can describe the devotedness which was the tie between them. The failing health of Mrs. Gascoigne had, during the last year of her life, compelled a residence in the south of England; and, when in the neighbourhood of Briarstone, the real kindness to the mother and daughter received from the Misses Brown induced Laura, after Mrs. Gascoigne's death, to make their house her home, till she could decide on her future plans. She was indeed lonely upon earth; and the straightened means which had urged her to teach many hours in the day, to supply her mother with luxuries and comforts, by stamping them as poor, prevented her being

known in those circles where her gentle virtues would have gained her real appreciating friends.

All that she had sacrificed in her filial devotion even her mother never knew, though that mighty sacrifice had been made full two years before her death. An invalid, whose life might pass from night till morning with none on earth to love and tend her but her child, Laura could not leave her. And when she had said this, her lover, in all the jealous irritation of an angry passionate nature, reproached her that she did not, could not, love him, else every other consideration would be waved—that the reports of her affections having been transferred to another were true, and therefore it was better they should part. She had meekly left him to resume her sad duties by her mother's side, and they had never met again. She knew he had been on the eve of leaving England for an honourable appointment in the West Indies, to which he had been nominated. But the wish would rise that he would write; he could not continue in anger towards her; time must show the purity, the justice, of her motive in her refusal, at such a moment, to leave England. And gladly would she have remained in one spot, hoping, believing on; but her mother needed constant change, and they had gone from place to place, that perhaps, even if he had written, no letter could have reached her. Three years had passed; and if the *hope* to prove her truth still lingered, the *expectation* had indeed long gone. And so Laura's early youth had passed, with not one flower cast upon it save those her own sweet disposition gave. Miss Brown's establishment was not, indeed, a congenial home; but she had her own room, her own pursuits; and though often yearning, how intensely! for sympathy and intellectual companionship, could be thankful and contented. She could not love the Miss Browns, but

she respected their sterling qualities, and regretted their eccentricities; and so found some good point to dilate on when others quizzed and laughed at them, that her presence always checked ill-nature.

"What is the cause of all this unusual confusion and excitement, Isabel?" inquired Laura one morning, entering her cousin's apartment; "do enlighten me. You always know every thing as thoroughly as Miss Brown herself."

"And you always know nothing, my most rustic cousin. Fortunate for you, you have so superior a person as myself to come to. There is to be a grand assembly in the lower regions to-night, and so of course sweet Whilelmina is practising and tuning enough to terrify away all harmony, and Angelica is buried in all the mysteries of supper craft. Don't look unbelieving, it is true."

"And it is Wednesday, not Saturday, Isabel."

"Granted, Laura; but such a grand event as receiving a baronet and his sister demands every thing uncommon, even to a change of night. It would be doing him no honour to receive him on a usual *soirée* night. Learned Lucretia is deep in the last novel and this month's most fashionable magazine. Folks report that Sir Sydney Harcourt likes literary conversation. I mean to try if Isabel Morland will not have more effect in captivating than the three graces, Lucretia, Whilelmina, and Angelica all together, backed by their whole corps of spinsters and school-girls. What has seized you, Laura, that you do not scold me, as usual, for my self-conceit. Do you begin to feel it is breath wasted? My dear, you shall see me in perfection to-night. Sir Sydney shall not depart heart-whole from Briarstone, though he does look as if nobody within it could be worth speaking to."

Isabel was standing before a large mirror, much too engrossed in admiring her own face and studying various

attitudes, and the best mode of arranging her glossy black hair, to notice how strangely and fitfully Laura's colour varied, and the voice in which she said, "Sir Sydney Harcourt, is he a new resident at Briarstone?" was not sufficiently agitated to cause remark, save to a much quicker perception than Isabel's.

"Yes, within the last few days; such a sensation has his arrival made, you must have heard of it even in your sanctum."

"My dear Isabel, have I not been staying out the last fortnight, and only returned last night?"

"Oh, by-the-by, so you have."

"How much you must have missed me!"

"I did the first few days; but, my good child, how could I think of any thing but the new lion, splendid as he is, too? He is only here for a month. Will you dare me to the field, Laura, to make that month two, or six, or something more into the bargain?"

"No, Isabel, you need no daring. Only remember your own peace may be endangered too."

"My peace! my dear foolish child. I shall see Sir Sydney at my feet long before any such catastrophe. Lady Harcourt! how well it sounds!"

"And Mr. Brown, Isabel?"

"The wretch! we have quarrelled irretrievably."

"And when I left you were giving him every encouragement you could."

"Nonsense, Laura! You are always preaching of my giving encouragement. The poor wretch would die in despair if I did not relent sometimes."

"Better, as I have always told you, put an end to his attentions at once. I am certain he would cease to persecute, if you did not encourage him, as you know you do."

"I know I do. Poor dear Gussy—he is very well, when I can get no one else."

"But indeed, Isabel, you are very wrong; your manner to him is the talk of every one."

"I do not care for what every one thinks, as I have told you hundreds of times. I will just pursue my own inclination, whether the world approve of it or not. What is the world to me? You cannot possibly imagine I mean ever to become Mrs. Brown. Why the very name is enough to make me drown myself first. No, I am free to receive all Sir Sydney's attentions, which I fully mean to win. You know I have some power, Laura."

"To attract, but not to keep, Isabel."

"Laura, if you were not a thorough simpleton, I should say you had designs on Sir Sydney yourself. Come, will you run a tilt with me for him? I will be generous, and keep back some of my fascinations, that we may try as equals, if you will."

"Thank you for the proposal, but it would hardly be fair. You will burst upon Sir Sydney in the freshness and brilliancy of novelty, in addition to all your other attractions. I have not even novelty to befriend me, for I rather think I have met him before."

"Sir Sydney Harcourt! How sly of you not to tell me all this time. When?—how?—where?"

"How could I tell you before, Isabel, when you have scarcely given me breathing space?"

"But do you know any thing of his former life? Report says he was jilted by a poor insignificant girl, and has been a professed woman-hater ever since. I do believe there he is in his curricle. What a splendid set-out!—do look, Laura. Stay—I shall see him better in the next room."

And to the next room she flew, so engrossed with Sir

Sydney's splendid driving that she did not perceive that Laura had not accepted the invitation, but had quietly retired to her own room.

"Miss Gascoigne, I trust you will join us to-night. I expect the honour of Sir Sydney Harcourt's and his accomplished sister's company. Your manners and appearance are so completely *comme il faut* that they will, no doubt, be glad to meet you. I do not approve of young ladies hunting after gaiety and dissipation; but it is a great advantage to mix in such society as I can offer you to-night. I shall expect to see you, of course." And without waiting for a reply—for such a thing as dissent to Miss Brown's commands was not to be thought of—Miss Brown, or learned Lucretia, in Isabel Morland's phraseology, majestically floated onwards.

"Laura, my sweet Laura, play over the accompaniment to this luscious 'Ah te o cara.' Mr. Givevoice will be here to-night, so I shall not want you; but now, if you will assist me, you will do me such a favour. The music is so mellifluous, it will quite repay you for the trouble." And Laura complied, regretting most sincerely that a person possessing such real sense and goodness as Miss Whilelmina should so expose herself to ridicule, but feeling that, young as she was, it was more her duty to bear with folly than reprove it.

"Laura, dear, put the finishing bows to Lucretia's cap for me, there's a love. I have such innumerable things to see after and get done before seven o'clock to-night that I have no time to breathe."

"You are always busy, my dear Miss Angelica. I wish you would make me of use. I shall finish this in ten minutes; so you had better give me something else to do."

"You are the best girl in the world, Laura, my dear; but

you can't assist me in household concerns. No one can; they worry me to death—but I don't grow thin upon them, that's one comfort. Come, I am glad you are smiling, Laura, my dear. What a pity you are not more merry. By-the-by, you may help me very much—I shall never get through the tea-making all by myself."

"Let me take it off your hands entirely. I will with pleasure."

"Thank you—thank you, my dear; but nothing would go right if I were not there too, depend upon it. If there is not Molly only going now to dust the rooms—the lazy huzzy!" And off trotted Miss Angelica, to scold and dust by turns.

The evening at length arrived. Confusion and noise, and sundry domestic jars, had subsided into silence and solemnity actually portentous. The pupils, with the exception of six most highly favoured, had been dismissed to their dormitories, and the school-room fitted up for the supper, which, under Miss Angelica's auspices in the culinary department, Miss Whilelmina's in the elegant arrangement of fruit and flowers, and Miss Lucretia's in the selection of sweets and solids, least hurtful to the gastronomic and digestive powers, was to be unequalled.

In the front drawing-room the Misses and Messrs. Brown and their train of boarders sat in imposing state. The covers had all been removed from the couches, *chairs-longues*, ottomans, &c., displaying a variety of embroidery by the fair fingers of Miss Whilelmina, and the splendid designs of Mr. Gustavus. The harp was uncovered; the guitar, with its broad blue ribbon, laid carelessly on the grand pianoforte, which was open; and at his post on the music-stool sat Mr. Gilbert Givevoice, fair and famous, smiling very sweetly on his tall pupil, Miss Whilelmina, who was in earnest con-

versation by his side. Miss Brown was on the sofa, looking wiser and grander than ever. A vacant place was left beside her, which no one thought of taking, for that it was designed for Miss Harcourt being as well known as if the name had been chalked up on the wall behind. Presently all the presentable inhabitants of Briarstone flocked in, attired in their very best, and satisfying Miss Brown as to the imposing appearance of her saloon. The back drawing-room, somewhat less brilliantly lighted, was occupied, as usual, by three or four sets of lovers. The blue room opened from it, and Laura was there ensconced as Miss Angelica's aid extraordinary. The door being thrown open, permitted a full view of the two drawing-rooms and all their proceedings, though from the blue room occupying a sort of angular corner, its inmates could not even be observed. Isabel Morland, looking actually dazzling, from her becoming dress and indescribable *tournure*, had chosen to settle down into a regular flirtation with a Mr. Manby, a young man she sometimes deigned to notice, at others deemed too little even to be visible. Mr. Gustavus looked black as a thunder-cloud; his thin form moving in and out the circle, but always hovering nearest Isabel, who took no more notice of him than of his vacant chair.

At length the magic words, "Sir Sydney and Miss Harcourt," were pronounced, and the door flung back as if its very hinges should suffer martyrdom to do them honour; and the whole roomful rose, as by one movement, except Isabel, who carelessly remained seated. Then came sundry flourishes and introductions, and mutual bows and curtseys, till Miss Harcourt fairly sank down on her seat of honour, casting a rueful glance at her brother, who returned it with one so irresistibly comic, that Isabel, to whom alone the look was visible, was compelled to smile too. Sir Sydney, whose

eye was wandering round the room, caught the look, eagerly bowed recognition, and in another minute was at her side, leaving Mr. Gustavus with half his tale untold.

That Sir Sydney was handsome, and had all the ease and elegance of a polished gentleman there could not be two opinions about; but there was something more about him, no one could exactly define what. He was too well bred to be haughty or repulsive when he had quite willingly accepted Miss Brown's invitation; yet he certainly did not seem in his element. He did smile and talk well; but Miss Whilelmina whispered to an intimate friend to observe how very melancholy his countenance was when at rest—she was certain he was not a happy man, and what could be the reason? Miss Harcourt was pronounced, after a trial of ten minutes, a most charming, accomplished, elegant girl; she was in reality merely an unaffected, genteel, quiet little personage, without any pretension whatever, and somewhat passed what she deemed girlhood.

The evening proceeded most harmoniously. Tea was accomplished elegantly under Miss Angelica's active surveillance. She was in the blue room, back and front drawing-room, so quickly, one after the other, that she seemed gifted with ubiquity for the evening. Then Miss Brown proposed music and dancing; she thought they were such delectable adjuncts to young people's amusement—such social pleasures, &c.; to all of which Miss Harcourt gracefully assented. She would be happy to perform her part; her brother seldom danced. A general lamentation followed. What a loss to the dancers—perhaps he would prefer music; they could offer him some very passable; and a concert commenced, in appearance very naturally given, but in reality performed in exact accordance with well-cogitated arrangements before hand.

Whether Sir Sydney benefited by the succession of "sweet

sounds" or not, remained a problem; as Isabel, to Miss Brown's and Mr. Gustavus's excessive annoyance, kept him so exclusively her attendant, that it required all his acquaintance with worldly tact to save him from rudeness to his hostesses, at the same time that he fully encouraged his companion. The only thought Isabel could spare from Sir Sydney was for Laura to witness her triumph; but Laura was no where to be seen. If Isabel could have known that her cousin saw her and Sir Sydney too, and the sickness of heart that vision gave, she might have triumphed more.

Dancing was at length accomplished, and Sir Sydney actually joined in it, dancing two quadrilles successively with Isabel, and then remaining standing with her, leaning against the piano, in such apparent earnest conversation as allowed attention to nothing else. Mr. Manby and several other beaux of Briarstone, whom Isabel never disdained at the public balls, when none superior were to be had, came in humble adoration entreating the honour of her hand. The toss of the head and curl of the lip with which they were refused elicited an expression in Sir Sydney's eye and very handsome mouth which must have startled Isabel, had she not been too engrossed with her own apparent conquest to perceive it.

"Sydney, you are wrong," whispered Miss Harcourt, as Isabel, for an instant, disappeared to find a musical album on which she much prided herself.

"Mary, I am right," was the reply; "if young ladies choose to play the coquette, it is but fair in us to pay them back in their own coin. How ungracious I should be to let all these graceful arts be wasted."

Miss Harcourt still looked disapproval, but further rejoinder was impossible; for Isabel, flushed with conquest, had returned more animated and engrossing than before.

"Of course you sing, Miss Morland?"

"No, Sir Sydney, I abhor all pretension; and as I knew I could never sing like a professor, I never attempted it."

"Pardon me, but I think you are wrong. There can be no necessity for private performers to equal professors; indeed, I would banish all Italian *bravuras* from private rooms."

"You will think my brother a sad Goth, Miss Morland; but he prefers a simple English ballad to anything else."

"I admire his taste; but you surely do not think ballad-singing an easily-accomplished matter?"

"Easy enough for any one with natural feeling," replied Sir Sydney, somewhat hastily, "and with boldness sufficient to express it. I would rather hear 'Go, forget me,' as I have heard it, than the finest Italian scena by a prima donna."

"I am delighted, Sir Sydney, that we have it in our power to afford you that gratification," energetically interposed Miss Whilelmina. The baronet made her a graceful bow, looking at his sister, however, with eyes that plainly said, "Save me from this."

"Laura!" (Sir Sydney actually started, but recovered himself so rapidly, that the sudden flushing of his brow was unremarked even by Isabel.) "Dear me, where can the dear girl have hid herself? I assure you, Sir Sydney, though she sings very seldom, she is considered first-rate in English ballads;" and away gracefully glided Miss Whilelmina in search of her.

"Who is this 'dear girl,' Miss Morland? Can she really sing that song? I would rather she chose any other," said Sir Sydney, in a tone almost of irritation.

Isabel looked up with one of her most mischievous smiles, which recalled him instantly to his artificial self; but, before he could rally sufficiently to speak again, Miss Whilelmina's

voice, in its most dulcet tones of encouragement, was close beside him.

"Come, Laura, my dear; we are all friends, you know: no one to be afraid of. Sir Sydney is so particularly partial to 'Go, forget me.' I am sure you will favour him."

"Or any other song the young lady likes: I would not be so arbitrary as to select for her," he exclaimed, springing up, with gentlemanly politeness, to relieve Miss Whilelmina of the music-book she carried, and, as he took it from her, coming in close contact with the fair girl behind her, whom her flowing drapery had, till then, completely concealed.

"Laura! Miss Gascoigne! Is it possible?" he articulated, in a tone which, though suppressed, must, to any perception less obtuse than the Misses Brown's, have betrayed intense emotion; but Miss Whilelmina only read casual acquaintanceship, and supposed an introduction had taken place in the early part of the evening. Laura bowed, Sir Sydney thought, coldly, and quietly passed on to the piano. The song was selected, and sung. She had often been heard before; but her voice had never seemed the same as at that moment. It might have been that what a baronet and his sister listened to with such interest, that the former had moved himself some distance from Miss Morland's fascinations to look at and listen to the singer unobserved, must be of greater value than it had ever before been supposed, or that there really was some spell in the song which Laura had never been heard to sing before (Miss Whilelmina, seeing it amongst her music, had spoken on supposition merely); but it fell upon the most thoughtless, the most obtuse, with such unaccountable power, that even when the strain ceased the sudden and unusual hush continued, until rudely broken by Mr. Gustavus Brown and Mr. Gilbert Givevoice clapping their hands most vehemently, exciting an uproar of applause,

under which Laura tried to make her escape, but she was prevented by the friendly advance of Miss Harcourt, who, with both hands extended, exclaimed, so as to be heard by all, "Miss Gascoigne, will you permit me to thank you for your beautiful song and claim your acquaintance in the same breath? We have, in truth, never met before; but if you knew me as well as I know you from report, we should be friends—nay, more, allies—already. You need not look so very terrified," she added, with laughing earnestness, "I am not a very formidable person, though my want of ceremony may really be rather startling; but I am so glad to have found you, that I must entreat Miss Brown's kind permission to excuse me, if I do forget everybody but you, for a little while."

Her ready tact met with the rejoinder she desired: she was entreated by all the sisters to make herself quite at home; they were delighted she should know their dear Laura. The blue room was quite deserted, and they could chat there quite comfortably; and to the blue room Miss Harcourt eagerly led her companion, who so trembled that she feared for the continuance of her composure. The door was not closed; to do so would have occasioned remark; but, as we said before, the room was so situated, for its inmates to be completely retired from all observation.

Isabel Morland was furious. She had seen Sir Sydney's suppressed emotion, and, with the quickness of thought, connected that and Miss Harcourt's eager address with the floating rumours of Sir Sydney's early life; but that her insignificant, unfashionable cousin, could be the heroine or the tale, and retain such hold of his recollection as to drive all her present fascinations from his mind, was a degradation not to be passively endured; in fact, it was impossible—she would not think about it—Sir Sydney should be caught yet;

but, at present, there certainly was little hope of it. He had deserted her, and was in earnest, if not agitated, conversation with Miss Lucretia and Miss Whilelmina Brown, who were listening, and answering, and then gradually entering into detail, with so much interest, that all superficial folly gave way, for the time, before the real goodness of heart which they in general so strenuously contrived to conceal.

"Disagreeable, designing old women!" Isabel thought, "what can he see in them to hold his attention so chained? He shall not listen any longer." And she glided close to the sofa where the two were seated. Sir Sydney rose, and offered her his seat. No; she would rather stand. Sir Sydney bowed, and quietly sat down again. Something seemed the matter with Isabel's bracelet; she clasped and unclasped it vehemently, but the movement did not disturb the earnest conversation which Sir Sydney, in a low voice, still continued. The trinket broke, and fell at his feet. He gracefully raised and presented it, regretting the accident, and turned again to the Misses Brown. An exclamation of "What could have become of her beautiful bouquet?" was the young lady's next effort to recall the deserter to his allegiance; but Sir Sydney did not even seem to hear it, or, if he did, before he could make a move to seek it, it was presented to her by the officious Gussy, with a most malicious bow. Isabel did not quite throw it at his head, as inclination prompted, but in a very few seconds every flower lay in fragments at her feet: one beautiful exotic fell, uninjured, so close to Miss Whilelmina, that she raised it with an expression of lamentation; but Isabel snatched it from her, and hastily stamped her pretty little foot upon it, with such a very unequivocal expression of temper, that Sir Sydney almost unconsciously fixed an astonished gaze upon her. It was too much to be borne quietly: she turned angrily away,

sauntering through the rooms, deigning to hold converse with none, and would have so far sacrificed all propriety, as to enter the blue room to solve the mystery at once, had not Laura and Miss Harcourt at that instant re-appeared. The countenance of the latter bore such evident traces of emotion, spite of the strong control she was practising, that Isabel was on the point of making some bitterly satirical remark, but those dark reproving eyes were again upon her, and Sir Sydney spoke before she did—but it was to Laura—not to her.

"Has my sister pleaded in vain, or may I indeed claim an old friend—and forgiveness?" he added—speaking the last word in so low a tone as only to be heard by his sister Laura and Isabel. Laura's lip so quivered, that no word would come; but her hand was unhesitatingly placed in that which Sir Sydney so eagerly extended, and her eyes met his. He drew her arm in his, and led her, to all appearance, so easily and naturally to a quadrille that was forming, that few suspected more than that they had been old friends; and how strange it was they should meet there and then; and, if he should talk to her, and make her sing twice again, during the short remainder of the evening, it was nothing remarkable!

Isabel had thrown herself moodily on one of the sofas in the blue room, half concealed by the curtains of the window, trying, in vain, to connect Sir Sydney's conduct and the report of his former life. It seemed clear enough; but she would not believe it. There was nothing in his manner but old acquaintanceship; she would conquer him yet. How could Laura vie with her? Alas, for the delusion! Miss Harcourt's shawl, by the provident care of Miss Angelica, had been brought to the blue room, and there, with Laura, she repaired; the Misses Brown, in trio, assembled to do

them great honour; and Isabel remained wholly unperceived. After being well shawled, Miss Harcourt disappeared with her body-guard of Browns. Sir Sydney, who had come ostensibly to hurry her, lingered.

"Laura! my own beloved! forgiven! loved through all! how could I doubt?—how could I make myself, and you, so miserable? Can I ever repay you, even by a long life of love? If you but knew the remorse, the wretchedness I have endured, you would forgive still more," were the somewhat incoherent sentences that fell distinctly on Isabel's ear; and, though there was no answer, no words, she could see Sir Sydney's arm thrown round her cousin, and that she shrunk not from his parting kiss. Another moment, and both had disappeared—Sir Sydney to take such farewell of the really worthy women who had befriended his Laura, that he left them in perfect raptures, and Laura to fly to the security of her own room, where, burying her face in her hands, the tears burst forth like a torrent, giving relief, vent, calm to a heart which, though so sustained in grief, had been so unused to joy, that its presence had well-nigh prevented its realization.

Our readers must imagine all the various crosses and vexatious *contretemps* which had prevented Sir Sidney Harcourt from discovering Laura, as he had so ardently desired to do; for ours is a mere sketch, not a tale. They must recollect he had, only the last six months, returned from the West Indies, a residence in which had entirely frustrated his wishes for a reconciliation, even by a letter; for, as we have said before, Mrs. Gascoigne's constant removals had prevented the possibility of any letter from such a distance finding them. When he had first loved her he was dependent on a coarse-minded, worldly relation, to whom an affection for a poor girl dared not be breathed. He had sought an appointment abroad, to escape a matrimonial connection

which was being forced upon him, and he had wished Laura to consent to a private marriage, and accompany him abroad as the companion of his sister, who preferred daring the miseries of the West Indies with her brother, to remaining in England without him. Sir Sydney (then plain Sydney Harcourt, with little hope of the baronetcy and independence for many years), naturally of a fiery and somewhat jealous temper, materially increased from the privations and checks he was constantly enduring, chose to believe Laura's calm, reasoning indifference, and her refusal to leave her ailing mother, only a cover to reject his affection for that of some richer lover. Time, his sister's representations, and the bitter pain of separation, cooled these unjust suspicions, and he only recollected Laura's look of suffering and tone of suppressed agony, with which she had bade him farewell.

The unexpected demise of his relation, the baronetcy, and a moderate independency, recalling him to England much sooner than he had dreamed of, every effort was put in force to find Laura, but in vain, till chance led him to Briarstone, and some magnetic instinct urged him to accept an invitation which it was more in his nature to have travelled some miles to avoid. He always declared his belief in mesmeric influences henceforward.

Isabel's schemes to prevent the course of true love from running smooth were fruitless. The old adage had already had its more than quontum of fulfilment, and Laura Gascoigne became Lady Harcourt before she was two months older. The delight and self-complacency of the Misses Brown was beyond description, Miss Lucretia looked grander, Miss Whilelmina more gracious, and Miss Angelica more bustling than ever. An accession of pupils and boarders was almost the immediate consequence of Laura's marriage, and the fair fame of Red Rose Villa was so well established, as fortu-

nately to receive no diminution from an affair which so scandalised Miss Brown, that she herself could not rally from it for months. After alternately encouraging Mr. Gustavus Brown and Mr. Gilbert Givevoice, till each gentleman so believed himself the favoured individual as to be ready to call his rival out, if he dared to deny it, Isabel Morland, one fine summer morning, eloped with an Italian emigrant count, who, much against Miss Brown's ideas of propriety, she would have to teach her Italian, leaving both lovers in the somewhat disagreeable predicament of having been most egregiously deceived and laughed at, at the very moment they were anticipating the *gold*, far more than the hand, of an heiress; and as such was the origin of their dreams, and the source of their disappointment, we can better forgive Isabel's conduct to them, than we can her conduct to herself. Alas, indeed, for those whom Nature has so gifted, and over whom principle has no sway!

THE LOST JEWEL.

WHAT will not chance do? The great, the beautiful, the astounding, the varied, the *rus in urbe* city of Paris—with all its gorgeous public buildings, consisting of imposing monuments, museums, triumphal arches and columns, public and private palaces, theatres, unique in the world, and its ever-lively and charming Boulevards, where time and all his train make you forget that he is passing—is, like all other capital cities, much changed within the last half century; but there are still existing certain parts and numerous buildings, the stones of which have not felt the hammer's fall since they were originally placed in their present situations, many centuries ago.

Of this number are certain bridges, which, although shorn of the shops with which they were originally covered, according to the taste of the architects of the time, still preserve the character, the physiognomy, the stamp of the age in which they were erected.

The bridge called Sainte Marie (after the Virgin) is one of them; and some sixty years ago had a line of elegant shops on each side of it, in which were ranged, with elaborate taste, all the varied objects which were the handiwork of the ever-active and tasteful Parisians, under the especial direction of the then, as now, fickle goddess of Fashion.

There crowded together *le grand seigneur et la grande dame, le petit maître, messieurs les abbés, et mesdemoiselles les grisettes,* to see and be seen, and to purchase those elegancies and trifles which were alone to be met with in that emporium of commerce.

It was here that a long line of goldsmiths, silversmiths, and jewellers had been established, from father to son, for many generations; and it was here that the then very celebrated Besnoist, the king's *protégé*, displayed in his *magasin* the most precious and most costly ornaments, enriched with the productions of Golconda's mine. If the name of a noble were not inscribed in the books of Besnoist, that noble was nobody, his son was nothing—even worse than that.

One day a magnificent *carrosse*, all covered with gold, was driven, with great state, to the door of this temple of riches, and there alighted from it a high-born gentleman, having all the outward air of a czar of the Muscovite empire; he was, however, only a rich boyard of that country, momentarily at Paris, and having heard of the fame of Besnoist, was determined that he alone should mount for him a most costly and superb diamond of the finest water, of the value of 800,000 francs. To the jeweller, then, did he address himself, who, perceiving his anxiety as to the safe custody of the gem, promised his boyardship that out of his own hands it should not go; and that to please him, he would himself mount it with all the *éclat* of which it was susceptible. Innumerable bows answered each other on the part of the two interlocutors, and the boyard was transported to his hotel.

Hardly had the worthy Besnoist lost sight of the gilded vehicle than he returned to gaze upon the precious stone, with all the rapture of a veritable amateur and connoisseur. He also immediately despatched a note to invite the celebrated painter Vernet, who, in addition to his surprising talent for painting marine subjects, possessed a most refined taste as a *dessinateur* of the things conducive to the elegance and pleasures of the rich.

In France in those days, as in the present, the fine arts lent their all-powerful aid in every branch of commerce to adorn the idol of the Parisians—fashion.

The great artist speedily answered the summons, equally charmed to see the sumptuous jewel as to exercise his fertile imagination in the composition of the ornamental mounting, the which having been decided upon, and approved by the jeweller, he took leave of his friend, and a long last look of the splendid object of his visit.

Besnoist, in raptures at the idea of astounding the court by the exhibition of his handiwork, in the cap of the boyard at the next grand levée at Versailles, deposited the superb new-comer to his establishment in a place of great safety; and, after a visit to the Grand Opera, and a second to the *Glacier à la mode*, he withdrew to his home to rest, still savouring upon his lips the delicious perfume of his ice *à la vanille*.

The *laitières* from the villages around Paris, with their horses and asses loaded with flowers and fruits, the produce of their gardens, and their provision of *fromages à la crême* in their beautiful heart-formed baskets, buried in leaves of the vine, had not been more *matinales* than the honest imitator of Benvenuto Cellini. Six o'clock had not yet struck upon the great *bourdon* * of Notre Dame, when the precious deposit was already illuminating the whole of the *atelier* of the bridge of Sainte Marie, by emitting its effulgent rays of dazzling magnificence from the counter upon which it lay, exposed to the all-powerful action of the sun of an August morning.

The good jeweller, anxious to please his new customer, and not to be interrupted by the arrival of his workmen, had risen at four o'clock, and had already prepared the gold

* Bell so called.

which was to encircle the gem. The charcoal fire, necessary for the smelting of the costly metal, had spread its unhealthy vapours throughout the *atelier;* the busy man, therefore, opened the window, as much to admit the fresh air of the morning as to expose upon the balcony some pots and cases of choice flowers, amongst which were many tuberoses, all of which had been presented to him the evening before, it being the eve of his saint's day.*

No man in the world ever felt himself more happy. In the enjoyment of robust health, in the possession of a good and lucrative business, and of ample means to carry it on, his sole wish was to continue to merit the esteem of his friends and fellow-citizens, to comfort and relieve the poor around him, and to establish in life two charming girls, his nieces, the only children of a departed brother, whom he had promised to be a father to them, and had, in consequence, made a vow of celibacy.

The last pot of forget-me-not had just been placed in the open air, when a rustling was heard; and, upon turning round, the good man was agreeably surprised to see his two beloved *protégées*, blooming with all the freshness of seventeen and eighteen springs, and elegantly dressed in hoop petticoats, covered with blush rose silk, their powdered hair ornamented with ribbons of the same colour, and both looking the pictures of health and happiness. They were standing with outstretched arms, and smilingly said they were come solely to embrace their good, their kind, their beloved uncle, and to be the first in the house to wish him "*une bonne et heureuse fête.*" The good man received their embraces with delight, and repaid them with interest; offered to each of them a ring as a souvenir, and engaged them to spare no pains in the preparations for some agreeable surprises to

* The 24th of August, the 25th being the *fête* of St. Louis.



E[illegible]

Frederick Heath

be offered to a few chosen friends who had been invited, according to custom, on the auspicious day. Happiness beamed on the trio of countenances. Compliance to the wishes of the uncle was readily promised, and a permission asked to contemplate the sparkling beauties of the dazzling stranger. Like the two sisters of Cinderella, did these lively maidens, instead of the glass slipper, pass the brilliant treasure from hand to hand, each inwardly wishing it were her own, when the kind uncle, seizing it suddenly, imprinted a kiss upon each of their cheeks, and chased them from his presence, calling them "*ses aimables étourdies.*"

"Ah! ah!" said the happy Besnoist, after the door was closed, in fixing the diamond with an air of intense admiration, "you are certainly very, very beautiful, and dear, no doubt, to your owner; but not half so dear are you, nor half so beautiful in my eyes, as are those two lovely romps who fain, I believe, would have carried you off. But that is not your destiny; you are now in my power, and I must fix you in a position that is every way worthy of you and myself, and put a stop to your future wanderings. *Allons donc à l'ouvrage!*" Saying which, and thinking, with tears of pleasure in his eyes, of his blooming nieces, whose footsteps he still heard upon the stairs, and whose voices were humming the well-known air, "*Où peut-on être mieux qu'au sein de sa famille?*" he approached the work-table, assembled the materials necessary for the operation of mounting, and having measured and weighed the jewel, he exclaimed, in opening the pincers to receive it, "*Ah! La belle piece!*" The words had scarcely escaped his lips, when, the handle of the pincers escaping——the diamond slipped from them, and——disappeared through the open window. A scream of terror and despair brought the whole of the family to the spot, as also the workmen who were waiting to

be let in. Affright was depicted upon every countenance. Exclamation followed exclamation. "It is a fit," said one; "Send for a doctor," urged a second; "He is dying," said others; "let us convey him to his room—he cannot remain thus on the floor." "My dear uncle, kindest of protectors, our only hope, look upon us, for pity's sake—Oh, God! protect us!" severally exclaimed the poor girls, in agonies of sorrow. The messengers returned with medical aid, and as Besnoist was universally esteemed, numbers of his neighbours pressed in at the open door to offer their services, and to know the cause of the tumult. After some time, and numerous remedies, the poor jeweller opened his eyes, and an instant afterwards, in a phrenzy of despair, exclaimed, "The diamond—the diamond!" and relapsed into his first state of insensibility. The two nieces were now struck with terror, and in their turn screamed with tears of anguish, "Oh! our dear uncle has been robbed, without doubt, of a precious diamond, which we left in his hands only ten minutes ago." Immediately, an influential neighbour caused the doors of the house to be closed, forbad any one to leave the place, and sent for the commissary of police. Upon the arrival of the latter personage and his agents, he was informed by the two nieces of the probable cause of the sudden attack of illness under which their uncle was suffering. The commissary suggested the propriety and the necessity of examining the whole premises, and searching the persons of all present; stating, at the same time, his regret to be obliged, by the duties of his office, to submit so many and such well-known persons to so humiliating a trial. One and all of the spectators of the scene, however, consented with one voice to the wish expressed by the civil functionary, and willingly assisted each other in the examination of every hole and corner of the house, and of each and every garment of each other. The

whole of this long and minute investigation was, as it has been shown, of course useless, and unproductive of any result; unless as such may be considered the immense hilarity and *à propos* of *bon mots* which were elicited from the greater number when the deformities, infirmities, and beauties, natural and unnatural, of some of those who formed the minority of those present, were displayed for the first time in public, and dragged, very much against the will of their innocent possessors, under the Argus eyes of their inquisitive, curious, and slander-tongued neighbours. Among the luckless actors in the scene, there were the old, the young, the rich, the poor, the handsome, the ugly, the well formed, the deformed; some of the latter, however, had been favoured by Fortune, in the shape of a good yearly income, and had paid Art largely for the representatives of the good things of which Nature had deprived them.

The wigs had the precedence of examination. Those of the men escaped without much molestation; not so those of the women, for they were turned inside out, upside down; and the poor cushions, some of which were in the form of the dwelling of the busy bee, were cut open to ascertain that nothing beyond their legitimate contents was enclosed therein.

Then came the turn of the artificial protuberances of nature's form divine, which were of every shape, and, in many, of immense sizes. The bustles, formerly known in France by a name unnameable, and in the present day by the titles of *caporal*, *lieutenant*, &c., up to the rank of *maréchal*, according to circumstances, were soon disposed of, and lay in slaughtered relics upon the field of inquiry. Prior to this research after the handiworks of nature and art, the commissary had sent one of his agents for the guard to watch the house and its neighbourhood, and a second to the

minister of the police, to inform him of the robbery, with a view of setting his myrmidons to work. Precisely at the moment that the *procès verbal** was being signed by all assembled, a loud knocking was heard at the door of the shop, and several voices demanded admission. Entrance was granted to one of the guards, who held by the arm a young, very handsome, and elegantly-dressed man, who had been seen escaping from the roof of Besnoist's house, and entering a window on that of the next. "Ah! here is the thief," was at once the almost general cry; two voices alone proclaimed him innocent—they were those of the two nieces, Louise and Marie Besnoist. The former was inspired by her love for the accused; the latter, by her affection for her sister, who fell senseless upon the floor, after screaming that it was not possible that Florien should be guilty. The crowd listened with distrust to all the assertions of the young man in support of his innocence, and his affirmations that he had not even heard of the existence of the diamond, since he had only arrived—that he had been let in by the servant at the private door—at the moment that his young friends were with their uncle; and that he had, knowing them to be there, concealed himself in a room up stairs, to surprise his dear Louise by his sudden apparition with the very beautiful nosegay which he still held in his hand, for he had clutched it fast in all his attempts to escape. He also said, that if he had not made his appearance when the alarm was given, and had tried to escape, it was because Besnoist had forbidden him to come to the house in consequence of his love of play, which he had renounced, and he had intended to swear to his dear Louise a complete reformation when, at her feet, he should offer to her this mark of respect and love—hoping, in return, to obtain through her interces-

* A statement in writing of the event.

sion the pardon of her uncle on this day of a *double fête*, when all the family should be assembled in joy and festivity.

Vain are the projects of man! If chance effects a great deal of good, sometimes it is often the cause of as much, or more, evil.

The arguments which poor Florien urged in his own favour militated against him; for he acknowledged himself to have been a *mauvais sujet;* that he had introduced himself into the house after a prohibition; that he had concealed himself; and then tried to escape unseen. The *commissaire* could not, or would not, believe his story. Besnoist was still speechless, and his insensibility was even attributed, by the dilapidated *sans déjeuner* group, to the machinations of the gentleman whose name was as flowery as his hand. They insisted upon his being rummaged in quest of the jewel, which ceremony being over, a loud and continued cry of "*En prison!—en prison!—en prison!*" resounded, until a *fiacre* was brought to the door, into which poor Florien was hurried by four *gendarmes*, and conveyed to prison. The *commissaire* now placed a guard at the bed-room door of poor Besnoist, until the physicians should pronounce him able to follow Florien; the hungry victims of their early curiosity were liberated, and went willingly to take their *café au lait.* The seals of the state were put on all the rooms of the house, and poor Louise, Marie, and the servants, went to the house of a relation of the family, to finish that day in sorrow and despair, which they had begun under such brilliant auspices.

"Sic transit gloria mundi."

Hardly had the busy hum of men completely dissipated the noiseless calm of early morn, than the active and inquisitive Parisians learnt the tidings of the imaginary robbery. It may be well conceived that the rich boyard was not among the

last to be informed of an event which touched him so closely, and made him so considerable a loser. He was in a violent rage, and went, as fast as a pair of superb Norman horses could drag his unwieldly *carrosse*, to the hotel of the minister of police, of whom he requested an immediate audience, which being granted, as usual to the possessor of riches, he wended his way through the motley crowd which encumbered the ante-chamber of the formidable and *redoutable* Monsieur de Sartines. Justice was demanded in a loud and authoritative tone, and promised with that easy grace which was the characteristic of all the evil-doers in France in "the Terror." Besnoist, who, although recovered from his attack, still lay extremely ill, was shortly visited by the minister, the boyard, and the proper authorities, to whom he related, in a most frank and open manner, the full details of the event, which already seemed, even to himself, to be the precursor of his total ruin; and, being informed of the arrest of Florien, asserted, in the most solemn tone, that this unfortunate young man, who had incurred his well-merited displeasure, was, nevertheless, entirely ignorant of the existence of the brilliant cause of his incarceration. All his asseverations were, however, disregarded, and, overwhelmed as he was by the intensity of his feelings, he was carried from his home, his business, and all he possessed, to become the inmate of a vile and loathsome prison. A *mandat* was issued to lay an opposition upon all his property in the bank and elsewhere.

Orders were however given, and executed with promptitude, to explore the river. The most skilful divers were employed during a whole month in the research, and guards were posted, night and day, to prevent the intrusion of boats in the neighbourhood; as also to watch over the measures taken for the recovery of the lost treasure, which, how-

ever sparkling, still continued to baffle all the endeavours to discover the place of its retreat. At the end of the month of September all further exploration ceased.

On the 1st of October, the preliminary measures, consisting of the examinations of the prisoners, witnesses, &c. &c., having taken place, the unfortunate Besnoist, and the still love-sick Florien, were brought to the bar of the criminal court of the *Palais de Justice*, and to the tribunal of public opinion. After a trial of two days, and in spite of the testimony of a host of the most illustrious and trustworthy witnesses, as to the probity, honour, and good repute of the excellent Besnoist, he was condemned by the former as guilty, as was also the luckless Florien, as his accomplice; but the latter court, in its unvarying judgment, acquitted the jeweller, from a conviction that a man so universally esteemed, so pious and charitable, could not deviate thus far from the paths of virtue; and the lover was exonerated from the charge brought against him by every feeling heart, the fairer half of the auditory declaring, *à haute voix*, that it was impossible for one so extremely handsome to commit so base an action; one, too, which was to overthrow the happiness of the family of his *bien aimée*.

The sentence, *dix ans de galères*, which was pronounced against the two victims of the effects of chance, was heard in the midst of a dead silence. Besnoist and Florien, struck as it were by a thunderbolt, were carried out of court, exclaiming, "*Puisse le bon Dieu avoir pitié de nous!*" and tears stood in the eyes of all those who descended the immense stone staircase of the palace. In the evening, a deputation of the *dames de la halle*—who were almost all of them the customers of Besnoist for the purchase of their earrings and crosses—waited upon the prisoners in their cells, and made an offering of crowns of *immortelles* to the—in their eyes—martyrs

of the effect of an accident, and with the earliest dawn of morning the same deputation started *on foot* to Versailles, upon the praiseworthy pilgrimage to implore his majesty to pardon these unfortunate men, or, at least, to obtain a commutation of their punishment. The members of the deputation were, in virtue of a right consecrated by ancient custom,* admitted to the presence of the royal Louis *et la belle et la bonne Marie Antoinette*, in the magnificent gallery of Louis the Fourteenth, but retired, in a few moments, with the echo of these royal words still resounding in their ears:—

"*Mes bonnes dames de Paris, je suis désolé de ne point accorder votre demande. Il faut que la justice se fasse.*"

Notwithstanding the pity excited in the breasts of the rich and powerful, who exerted all the influence they possessed in favour of the unfortunate Besnoist, who was universally respected; and, notwithstanding that the rich and unfeeling boyard had been reimbursed by the sale of all the jeweller's property, this good man was, a short time after, removed, with his companion in misfortune, to the *bagnes de Toulon*, there to eke out a long and miserable succession of weeks, months, and years, in bodily fatigue by day, and mental torture by night, supported only by his inward monitor of conscious innocence. The haughty Muscovite had rendered great services of a pecuniary nature to the nobles in power, and all appeals to his humanity and pity, in behalf of these innocent victims, were met with an inexorable refusal to interfere; nay, he even affirmed that justice

* This custom is of high antiquity. *Les dames de la halle* had a right to visit the king upon all great occasions, and to present the sovereign with nosegays on the days of fêtes. They always received, in return, a present in money, and, what they esteemed more than that, a salute from the royal lips. One of these ladies never afterwards would allow even her husband to make her forget the honour she had received. They sometimes have shown their dissatisfaction by staying away when they did not approve the acts of the sovereign.

had not been rendered to him, since he had striven, by every means, to have them condemned to death, from which cruel condemnation, the hitherto irreproachable character of Besnoist had alone saved them. Such was then the ascendency and power of riches!

The gay, the careless, the dissipated Florien; the steady, the industrious, the charitable Besnoist, now appeared, in the midst of their future companions (many of whose hands were tinged by crimes of the deepest dye), stripped of their former garments: the former, of his elegant pea-green embroidered satin coat, &c.; the latter, of his Barbaud-blue suit, equally rich, but more quiet in its appearance and cut. No one would have distinguished either of them in their parti-coloured dress and heavily loaded with fetters, from the rest of the motley group by which they were surrounded, had it not been by the calm and dignified appearance, the stamp of virtue and innocence, which pervaded each movement and every action of Besnoist; and the kind, affectionate, nay, even filial attention of Florien, to the accidental author of his present degraded condition. After some few weeks, the superintendent, from a feeling of commiseration, allowed them to be chained together. This was, in their sad position, a source of comparative felicity, for now, at least, they were never separated from each other; they could communicate their least thoughts, and offer those consolations which each but too often stood in need of. Florien, with all the tact and judgment of a noble and spirited soul, never once hinted at the cause of their mutual misery, but cheered his mournful companion by his projects for the future, if God should spare their lives; called him always by the endearing name of father, and relieved him, by the strength of his young arms, of at least half of the fatigue of his daily labour. By their mutual devotedness, and by their assiduity to please, they

gained the esteem and respect of all around them; and, ultimately, succeeded in obtaining all the *adoucissemens* which the superintendents could offer to their horrible captivity. Louise and Marie, with their nurse, an old and faithful servant, had arrived at Toulon as soon as circumstances would permit, and, by the industry of their hands, supported themselves, and procured for their unfortunate relation, lover, and friend, those little comforts, which had a double zest coming from those who so tenderly loved and so courageously upheld them.

Time, which waits for no man, still kept on his wonted and steady pace; and year succeeded year, the last seeming always longer than its predecessor, till, on one brilliant night, after an hour's habitual chat, they were summoned to quit the two, to them, guardian angels, who had ministered to their wants both corporal and mental. Then, indeed, took place a scene which moved to tears all the beholders. This night was to be the last of their captivity. At the roaring sound of the cannon for retreat, the four beings who had hitherto sat huddled together, suddenly arose, and each now throwing their arms around the necks of the others, now hanging all together in a cluster, like bees at the mouth of a hive, with their voices choking for utterance, uttered, with an almost hysteric scream, "*A demain, à demain, à demain, au point du jour. Oh! oui, au point du jour, pour ne plus quitter!*"

Faithful to their promise, the happy nieces and their constant friend were to be seen, at the break of day, already awaiting the sound of the morning gun, which, although announcing an endless slavery to many thousands who heard it, struck like the wind of Heaven upon the ears of Besnoist and Florien, who, before the echo had ceased to resound, found themselves free, at liberty, without the gates, and locked in the arms of their well-beloved.

A coach, hired with the fruits of the continued and active industry of the lovely Louise and Marie, was stationed at a short distance upon the road, to which they bent their steps, as soon as the emotion which had come over each of them had subsided. It had been long decided by all that they should quit Toulon, and the recollection of all its miseries, the moment the gates should close behind them. They had, in consequence, already begun to put this plan in execution, by engaging the vehicle and the driver of it for fourteen days; but, even at the moment they were all quietly seated in it, they had not yet positively decided to what city or town they should direct their course. The pure heart and conscience of Besnoist told him that he had nothing to fear by returning to Paris; but his *amour-propre* had suffered so much in the capital from his unmerited condemnation, that he was unwilling to meet the scorn and the jeers of the ignorant and unworthy; though they might be more than counterbalanced by the reception of some kind friends whom he hoped still to possess there; he therefore hinted a wish to go to Geneva, with which place he had had some affairs of interest, in years long gone by. Florien, who had an uncle at Lyons that had promised to do something for him on his re-appearance in the world, pressed his friends to consent to go with him to that city, where they might all still live together, and thus do without the society of strangers. Marie had no wish but one, and that was to devote her whole life to the comfort and consolation of her dear uncle. Louise had many wishes, and the greatest and uppermost was to return to the capital city. She therefore begged and prayed that her uncle would consent to return to a place where he had lived so long, and been always so deservedly surrounded by the esteem and respect of his fellow-citizens. She put forth all her eloquence, made use of all her winning ways of

persuasion, affirming, that to Paris alone they ought to go, since it was the city of resources; that their past friends would crowd round to welcome them; that she felt an impulse to go there, which she could not resist; and that, rather than stay away, she would even quit all near and dear to her, and go, were it on foot.

A moment of silence and astonishment ensued, during which, however, the eyes of all present enacted each an important part. The nurse raised hers to heaven, as if to implore protection for her old master and family. Marie cast her bright ones upon all present, alternately seeking, in those of her neighbours, for answers to the inquiries which she darted with rapidity to theirs. The eyes of Florien, as also those of Louise, were fixed with immobility upon each other; but in their mutual look there was such an expression of tenderness, happiness, and love, that Besnoist could no longer contain his overpowering emotion, and leaning forward, with tears streaming from his, he threw his arms around the necks of the two, called them "*ses enfans bien aimés*," promised them to go where they pleased, but upon one sole condition, that of their consenting to be married within three months. The condition was accepted with rapture and gratitude, and one loud cry of "*A Paris, à Paris, à Paris*," informed the French Jehu to which point he was to direct his horses' heads.

Hardly had the heavy coach received an impetus from the strength of the way-worn horses, than Besnoist thus addressed his hearers:—

"My good friends, Providence has willed that we should be sorely afflicted. He has, however, sustained and supported us in a wonderful manner. Those fair hands, which I had hoped ever to preserve from toil and labour, have been for ten long years actively employed, early and late, in performing the most painful works, to furnish me and my

companion in misery with those comforts without which we must have sunk. We are now poor—Oh! very poor—but we have good health. Let us take courage. The same hand that permitted us to be cast down may yet be pleased to raise us up; and let us, if this should happen, be as united in our new prosperity, as we have been in our adversity. Florien, my friend—my more than friend, my son!—I place one-half of the happiness which remains to me on this side the grave in your hands, when I confide to your care and love my niece, my daughter, my Louise; take her, guard her as a great treasure;—poverty is her portion, but my blessings accompany her and you; and as they are those of an upright man, they yet may bring happiness to you. *Que la volonté de Dieu soit faite!*"

"*Elle le sera, et elle nous consolera,*" responded the auditors of Besnoist's speech.

On a cheerless night of the month of November, after a month of weary travel by short days' journeys, over roads flooded with heavy rains, did the heavy and nearly worn out machine, with its contents of living beings, almost exhausted to death, arrive at the Barrière de Fontainebleau. Alas! they had nothing contraband with them, nor anything to pay duty for. Thus, when the searching-clerks presented themselves, to ask "*Avez-vous quelque chose à déclarer?*" they were allowed to continue their way, upon their response, "*Beaucoup de misère et beaucoup d'espérance,*" things not exciseable in any country.

In the neighbourhood of the Pont St. Marie, the ancient residence of poor Besnoist, and upon the Quai des Orfévres, there had existed, in his golden days, a small hotel, of narrow front, immense elevation, mean appearance, and shabbily furnished, which sheltered, during their stay in the capital, the casual visitors from the distant

provinces, to whom economy was an imperative duty. This house had been kept in those days by a man named Boucher, who had been protected by Besnoist, for the latter had frequently paid the score of those who had exhausted their funds during their stay there, whilst waiting for the accomplishment of the promises of the distributors of government places.

To Boucher's then did Besnoist tell the charioteer to drive, when he escaped from out of his jack-boots, and presented himself at the coach-door to ask his last orders; and then, turning to his family, added, "if his heart is still as tender as it used to be, he will, I am sure, give us a hearty welcome; if not——" The rest was inaudible.

That clock, which had sounded the knell of so many sanguinary tragedies—that of the Hotel de Ville—was now striking twelve, as the fatigued and desponding party, buried in silence, traversed the Place de Grève,* without perceiving a single human being. As they approached the Pont St. Marie, all eyes were involuntarily turned towards that part of it where so many happy hours had been passed, and each strove to get a glimpse of their former abode. Their astonishment was great when they perceived that no obstacle prevented them from discerning the buildings on the other side of the quay: they believed themselves dreaming, but, upon closely inspecting the *alentours*, it was clear to them that the bridge was shorn of its former dwellings, and retained only its side parapets. The houses had all been taken down, as much to improve the aspect of the city, and to increase the circulation of air in this confined thoroughfare, as to remove a horrible and fearful nuisance—that of some houses, which, having been occupied by persons of bad repute, had been, as it was generally believed, the theatre of many black

* It was there that the execution of criminals then took place.

crimes, the victims of which had been made to disappear through the back windows which hung over the river.

The spectators of this change were now more overpowered than before, and poor Besnoist burst into an agony of sorrow, from which, however, he was aroused by the sudden halt of the coach, and the loud and reiterated knocks at the door of the hotel, the which being opened by the host, *en bonnet de coton*, with a lamp in his hand, the following dialogue took place.

"Is the master of the hotel within?"

"No, he is without,—he stands before you."

"But you are not Monsieur Boucher?"

"No, thank God; nor do I wish to be where he is."

Besnoist, who was confounded, and whose thoughts reverted to his past misery, asked, "Is he in prison?"

"Yes," was the answer; "but in a very close one, from whence no money will liberate him: he is in his grave. He was very old; his affairs turned out badly; I bought his establishment, and took care of him after the death of all his family: he had treated his false friends with sufficient kindness to make them abandon him in his troubles. He died in my arms, and made me make a solemn promise, which I shall faithfully execute, if the opportunity ever presents itself, but I fear I shall never have that pleasure. He was a good man, sir. What might be the motive of your inquiry after him?"

"I had hoped," answered Besnoist, "to find him still alive, and to have asked him a real service."

"What may that be, if it is not rude to ask, sir?"

"It was to lodge me and mine for a day or two."

"And why should not his representative have that honour and pleasure?"

"You will not consider, perhaps, that you have the former in receiving us; but the latter you will certainly have, and of

the purest kind, if your heart has really dictated the words you have just uttered."

"Why should you doubt it? What is your name?"

The jeweller hesitated,—his emotions deprived him of speech.

"What is the matter?" continued the host. "Do, my dear young ladies, explain this mystery, and tell me who you are; for my head begins to turn, my eyes are troubled, and I feel myself falling."

"We are the nieces of this gentleman," said Louise, "and this young——"

"Is Florien," exclaimed the *aubergist;* "and you are the charming Louise; and that lady, the sprightly Marie; and your uncle, the respectable and injured Besnoist; and you," seizing hold of the withered hand of the old nurse, "are Jeannette, my own dear mother's cousin. May God be praised! I shall now indeed be happy." Then turning to the door, he knocked such a peal, that had he intended to awaken poor Boucher by it, he could not have knocked a louder. "*Ohé, ohé, ohé!—la maison! la maison!—Où sont-ils donc, les ronfleurs?*" In a moment two stout savoyards were at the side of the coach, to assist the inmates of it to alight, whilst the innkeeper stood by, holding the lamp with a hand trembling with joy, and exclaiming in a tone of ecstasy, "*Descendez, mes bons amis, soyez les bien-venus. Vous cherchiez Boucher? eh bien! moi, je m'appelle Boulanger, l'un vaut l'autre, je crois. Un boulanger vivant vaut mieux, pour des pauvres voyageurs, que vingt bons bouchers morts. Entrez, entrez, je vous supplie. Permettez-moi de vous offrir la main.*"

Florien now sprang from the coach at one leap, and resumed, for the first time since ten years, his gallant bearing, handing his fair friends and their good *bonne* into the house with the utmost gallantry. He then returned, to assist his

adopted father, whose tears were flowing fast; whilst his lips uttered thanks to God for his mercies, and to the instrument of them. M. Boulanger, who had doffed his night-cap at the sight of Besnoist, followed them with a face brilliant with joy.

Hardly were they all seated, when poor Besnoist, in thinking of his forlorn situation, as regarded his future prospects, began to make sundry inquiries of his host as to by-gone times. "The past is past," said the latter, "think no more of it; you are now in my house, and you shall only quit it for a better, so long as my commerce thrives. God will provide for the future. Command here as you think proper. Boucher, who always called you his protector, sold me his house cheap, and paid me for his board and lodging with the interest of the sum paid by me: the capital is in the hands of a notary for your use: such was the will of the deceased Boucher, and I know not why you have not been informed of the circumstance. We shall learn that to-morrow. In the meantime eat, drink, and be merry."

The repast being finished, they all retired to repose, although some of them not to sleep.

The next morning it might be said that good Besnoist was holding a "*lever*." The influx of sympathizers was great. Pre-eminent was the "*députation des dames de la halle*," with nosegays, and offers of service; and sundry tradesmen, with offers of unlimited credit, added to prayers for future happiness. These unexpected kindnesses moved the good Besnoist and his family extremely, for the best they had hoped for was to escape the eyes of the curious; but the news had spread through the neighbourhood, and hence the interest excited.

During the day, Boulanger, accompanied by Florien, went to the notary's house, to state the arrival of the jeweller, and to make arrangements for the payment of the sum deposited.

There, alas! they discovered that that public officer had absconded a month before, carrying with him the moneys of his numerous clients. This was indeed a severe blow to both the inquirers, who returned to the hotel much cast down; the one because he was the innocent cause of the loss of this sum, which had been placed, by his advice, in the hands of the fugitive notary, who having promised to send the amount to Besnoist at Toulon, the hotel-keeper had thought all was right, and had made no further inquiry; the other because he had seen in this god-send, which was now irrecoverably lost, the means of accomplishing his marriage with his dear Louise, and settling some way, by which they might still all live together, and that happily, in the society of each other.

There remained to Boulanger, however, the consoling reflection, that he could accomplish the sacred promise which he had made to the dying Boucher, namely, to protect and offer every possible service to Besnoist, and any branch of his family, if ever his assistance should be wanted. Chance had enabled him to commence the execution of the solemn vow, and he was resolved to do all that he could to solace the jeweller's family on this sad occasion, which might be justly called a second and severe trial.

The poor man, already inured to the effects of the cruelty of Fortune, received the announcement of this new calamity with as much fortitude as could be expected, and his worthy host's kind offers with the gratitude they merited; but, being willing to lighten the burden which he felt he had brought on his new and excellent friend, he consulted with his family as to the means of doing so. He had already received the visit of a man who had formerly been his workman, but was now in business for himself; this man he sent for, and it was agreed that Besnoist should be

furnished with the tools necessary for working at his former trade; that Florien should learn the business; and that the two should be furnished with a portion of the work which the new *patron* had orders for.

Early and late did Besnoist and Florien now labour, with light hearts, to try to remunerate their kind host for his goodness to them; and Louise and Marie seconded their efforts, by their industry at needlework; charming their companions, at the same time, by singing lively songs to beguile the time.

A month had thus passed away, and although some money had been earned, it barely sufficed to cover half the expense which they knew they must have incurred in their present home. They all looked forward with confidence to the time when Florien should become a perfect workman, but that day was far distant. Poor Besnoist had formerly been considered as the eagle of his profession; but, alas! now, from anxiety and grief, and a slight palsy in his hands, he might hardly be termed a sparrow; he possessed, however, taste and judgment, two very great requisites in the art of working gold.

One fine morning (it happened to be a Sunday), they had risen earlier than usual, and had just returned from the church of St. Eustache, to which they invariably went every day to attend the first mass, bringing with them the good ecclesiastic who had officiated at the altar, and who had given them all his benediction, which they had received with becoming humility and piety. The breakfast-table was soon spread, with much simplicity, but with a certain degree of elegance. The repast consisted of *café à la crême*, fresh eggs, some dried fruits, and *brioches* (a light cake much in repute); the latter the usual regale on the Sabbath. The priest gave his blessing, and the table was immediately encircled by the little party. Gaiety was the order of the morning, and

even a December sun did not fail to enhance their cheer fulness.

And now Besnoist revealed to the worthy priest his intentions with regard to the marriage of Florien and Louise, requested his advice and counsel, and begged that he would consent to perform the ceremony in the course of a month.

The excellent and pious abbé, having reflected a few minutes (which appeared as many hours to the two lovers), responded in the following words:—

"My good children, God has permitted that you should be sorely afflicted; but, rely upon it, He destines you to see better and happier days. You have all deposited in my bosom the secret of your most intimate thoughts, wishes, and hopes; there is nothing but purity in them; and future success must alone crown the formation of them. But I would advise you not to act with too much precipitancy in this matter; wait, and see what time may bring. Fix a more distant period—say a year hence; when, if Providence should prosper your worldly interests, you may all be made happy by the happiness of two."

A hearty consent, but accompanied with some tears, was given to the counsel of the patriarch. Florien exclaimed, in a deep monologue, "*Encore un an! c'est bien long, c'est trois cent soixante cinq jours, autant le remettre au jour de la nouvelle année, et j'aurais une bonne étrenne en recevant la main de ma bonne Louise.*"

Besnoist now proposed to drink to the health of the affianced couple. This was readily consented to, with many demonstrations of affection and love; and the whole party arose and moved to the windows, which overlooked the Seine, and from which the site of their former dwelling was clearly visible.

The room in which they had breakfasted was on the

seventh floor, and the crowded streets, filled with people in their Sunday clothes, attracted their attention. Suddenly Louise pointed out to Florien, upon whose arm she was leaning, a young newly-married couple, who were ascending the steps of the bridge. The bride was gaily dressed, her cap decorated with the usual crown of orange flowers, and she walked gaily along through the glare of the sun, preceded and followed by her friends.

She approached the centre of the bridge, and there met some one, who was very earnest in his compliments. Louise, who followed her with intent gaze, turned gently towards Florien, in saying, "When shall we be as happy as they?" "In a year hence," was the answer. Louise, who now directed her eyes again to the bridge, suddenly threw her arms around the neck of Florien, and exclaimed, in convulsive accents, "Oh, no! not so long; in a month hence—God wills it should be so." She now sank into a chair, and all gathered around her, in great alarm, for her eyes were fixed. At length she exclaimed—"Do you see the diamond? Go and fetch it; it is upon the ——" She then fell back insensible. The family in tears thought that her reason had fled, and made use of the most endearing expressions to soothe and calm her sufferings. After a time she recovered her senses, and rushed suddenly to the open window, dragging Florien with her, and followed by the others. "Oh, look! oh, look! there is the author of our past misery, but now the harbinger of future joy. Do you see it?—there—there—there—at the top of the buttress of the centre arch, between the stones! Look! it sets the bridge on fire!" Indeed, there lay in that place an object of unusual radiance, which almost dazzled the sight. All saw it, and were persuaded it could only be the long-lost diamond, which had escaped discovery in former times, and in latter ones also, notwith-

standing all the overthrow and removal of the materials of the houses.

A council was now held, in which it was decided that Florien should go immediately and station himself upon the bridge as a guard, without seeming to be such; that the abbé and Besnoist should go to the minister of justice and declare the fact; and last, not least, that the greatest secrecy should be observed by all. The happy, but agitated jeweller, and his pious friend, after much difficulty, found access to the man in power, who immediately ordered a regiment of guards to be sent to clear the bridge of the people upon it; gave orders for a scaffold to be placed against the buttress; and ordered Besnoist, accompanied by Florien, to ascend, and take possession of the diamond, if such it were, saying—"It is you that lost it, it is but just you should have the honour of recovering it." In three short minutes, a cry from Florien announced to the almost countless multitude assembled that it was indeed the diamond. The applauding crowd now withdrew, passing before the hotel, at the first floor windows of which stood the lovely Louise and Marie, still more beautiful in their tears, kissing their hands, and thanking with their lips the cheers of the delighted Parisians.

Besnoist and Florien, enchanted with the success of their enterprise, were transported in triumph upon the shoulders of the *forts de la halle*, from the bridge to the hotel, accompanied by an immense throng, which was increased at every moment, for the news spread far and wide throughout the capital.

The scene which took place within the house may be imagined, but cannot be described. They were supremely happy; and the good abbé, after offering up thanks to God, surrounded by the happy family upon their knees, consented to return to dine with them. The day was passed in the

greatest conviviality, and the hour of midnight resounded as they separated, to go each to pour out thanksgivings to an all-merciful Providence.

It was decided by his majesty in council, on the morrow, that the diamond, which had passed the night at the treasury, should be given up to the now happy Besnoist; that an act of rehabilitation should be passed in favour of the two sufferers of this most singular event; and that the court of Russia, to which the boyard had returned indemnified by the sale of all the property of the unfortunate jeweller, should be apprized of the fact.

The king also ordered that Besnoist and his family should be presented to him. This was done, and his majesty, in the midst of his nobles, expressed his sincere regret and congratulation to the victims of the untoward accident, to whom a place of trust and honour was confided.

The diamond was sold, and the promise made by Besnoist in the coach was scrupulously adhered to. The marriage of Florien and Louise took place at the church of St. Eustache. The abbé gave them his blessing after the ceremony, and the happy pair, dressed in the most elegant manner, returned, each holding Besnoist by the arm, and followed by their relations and friends to the *carrosses* which were waiting for them at the entrance, in the midst of the benedictions of the citizens and the poor of Paris, to whom the happy jeweller had made an offering of twenty thousand francs!

They repaired to their new hotel, where they were serenaded till a late hour at night. The day was gaily passed, completely *en famille*, and the hospitable Boulanger, who had consented to the proposition of Besnoist to live with them, really made a most magnificent appearance at the festive board, in—no, not *un bonnet de coton*, but—a tremendous wig *à la Roquelaure*

(so named after the celebrated man of fashion the Marquis de Roquelaure), inundated with powder. The lovely Marie won the heart of one of the *garçons de mariage* of Florien. The old Jeannette in her joy wetted three pocket handkerchiefs.

What will not chance do? and what will not virtue, aided by religion and resignation, effect?

TO HENRIETTA SUSAN FIELDING.

BY THE REV. HENRY THOMPSON, M. A., CANTAB.

I BARE thee to the Font—I spake thy vow:
I saw the life-bestowing waters shed,
And the great Chief of Martyrs' signet dread
Set solemn on thy pure and painless brow:—
O change! yet pure and painless is it now!
The martyr's cell is left untenanted:
Fulfill'd are sign and sufferance; o'er thy bed
In thankful grief, in sorrowing hope, we bow.
Loss beyond speech! solace beyond conceiving!
Vain now thy sire's* proud heritage of fame
To comfort him or his, amid such grieving!
But to have train'd thee for such glorious aim!
To feel thee safe; to work and wait, believing
"We yet shall meet!"—scarce Eden more may claim.

RECTORY, WRINGTON,
February 7, 1847.

* Copley Fielding, Esq.

THE LINDEN TREE.

BY BARRY CORNWALL.

HERE 's a song for thee,—of the linden tree!
A song of the silken Lime!
There is no other tree so pleaseth me,
No other so fit for rhyme.

When I was a boy, it was all my joy
To rest in its scented shade,
When the sun was high, and the river nigh
A musical murmur made:

When, floating along like a wingéd song,
The traveller-bee would stop,
And choose for his bower the lime-tree flower,
And drink—to the last sweet drop.

When the evening star stole forth, afar,
And the gnats flew round and round,
I sought for a rhyme, beneath the lime,
Or dreamed on the grassy ground.

Ah!—years have fled; and the linden, dead,
Is a brand on the cotter's floor;
And the river creeps through its slimy deeps,
And youth—is a thought of yore!

Yet—they live again, in the dreamer's brain:
As deeds of love and wrong,
Which pass with a sigh, and seem to die,
Survive in the poet's song.

THE BLIND MAN AND THE CHILD.

A LEGEND OF DANZIG.

BY ELIZABETH YOUATT.

"A melancholy legend, dim with the lapse of years,
And scarcely to be read for dust—*and tears.*"

E. V.

It was drawing towards the close of a dull, autumnal day, when an aged man, led by a little fair-haired child, entered the city of Danzig, whose strange grotesque-looking buildings appeared gloomy enough in the gathering twilight.

"At last!" exclaimed he, between his clenched teeth. "Ah, they never thought I should have found my way back in the dark!"

"Have we friends in Danzig, grandfather?" asked his young companion, eagerly.

"No, nor anywhere else on earth, poor child!"

"Well, well, we have God, and one another!" was the cheerful reply. "And now, what am I to do next?"

"Inquire our nearest way to the Alt-stadt; and then you must look out for some quiet lodging. We shall rest here for some time—you must need rest, Löttchen."

The little girl did as she was desired; while gradually, as they walked slowly on, according to the direction given them, the streets narrowed and became close, and dirty, and ill constructed. It was quite dusk when they reached the old town, and a cold, drizzling rain fell fast and heavily. But

there were cheerful lights burning in many a humble dwelling, and glancing and flitting mockingly on the wet pavement without. Here and there a sunburnt mechanic, with his shirt-sleeves rolled up above the elbow, lounged idly against the door-post, smoking; and, at one house, a widow woman, with a cap as white as snow, was looking dreamily out into the twilight, who started, and glanced pityingly towards Lotte and her companion, as they went past. And when the girl turned back instinctively, won by that kind look, advanced to meet her with the ready sympathy of a warm, benevolent heart.

"Can I be of any service to you, my child?"

"Oh, yes, if you could tell me where we might procure a night's lodging. Perhaps you let lodgings?" added Lotte, timidly. "I should like to live with you."

The widow was touched by her confiding simplicity.

"Do you come from far?" asked she, turning to the old man.

"Yes, hundreds and hundreds of miles away—I cannot tell where."

"But you must remember the name of the place, surely?"

"How should I, when I never knew it."

"Hush," whispered Lotte, gently; "he is blind!"

The good woman asked no more questions; and, without even pausing to ascertain whether she was likely to be remunerated for her trouble, immediately led the way to her humble dwelling; where she was soon busily employed in preparing for the accommodation of her unexpected guests. Lotte was half asleep before she had finished, with her head resting against her grandfather's knees, who sat buried in thought, but grew quite lively again after she had eaten her supper, and profuse in her grateful thanks and blessings; so that we may be sure their kind hostess already thought herself overpaid.

The old man was lodged in a little room by himself, refusing all assistance, as was his wont. And then Margaret, for that was the good woman's name, would insist upon undressing Lotte herself, drying her damp feet, and smoothing out her long, tangled hair, with all a mother's tenderness. And when the child had repeated her simple prayers, in which she did not forget this new friend whom Heaven had sent her, and laid down in her neat little bed, with its snowy hangings, she felt too happy to sleep, and begged that Margaret would not leave her just yet. That night Lotte related the simple and touching history of her young life; but we prefer giving it in our own words.

The only home she could remember was a lonely hut, situated on the banks of a river, with a dense wood behind, where she used to go and gather flowers, and listen to the singing of the birds. But she never ventured far in; for there were stories told among the fishermen of people being lost there, or eaten up by the wild beasts; and it was very gloomy, the sun never shining even in summer, by reason of the thick trees that would not suffer its beams to penetrate. Sometimes she went with her mother to search for amber, but it was frequently weeks and weeks before they met with any success. The fishermen trading on the coast were always glad to purchase it of them, when they found any. She recollected once finding a piece as large as an egg, which sold for a great deal —or what seemed a great deal to them.

Lotte never saw her father, but understood that he died of a fever soon after she was born; and her mother, finding it lonely without him, had gone home to reside with her aged parent. She never heard her called anything but Lotte, like herself. She was little Lotte or Löttchen, then, to distinguish them apart. The poor woman was never well; and, latterly, the child could almost see her growing paler and paler, and

thinner and thinner, day by day—but she never complained. Sometimes she would weep all of a sudden, shuddering and wringing her hands, and might frequently be heard to cry out in her troubled sleep—"My father! my poor father!" She was very gentle with the old man, and had a strange influence over him in his wildest moods. Just before she died, she called Lotte to her bedside, and made her promise to supply her place, as far as she was able, to her aged grandfather; and love and bear with him, for he had suffered much, and was an injured man, whom God would avenge in his own good time.

But somehow, after her mother's death, a change came over him, and he grew peevish and querulous; while the child remembered her promise, and bore with him for her sake who was no more; never leaving him, even to look for amber, or flowers, or hear the birds singing in the old wood; for she was afraid lest any harm should come to him in her absence; for he had grown feeble and restless, and would walk up and down their little chamber, muttering wildly to himself, by the hour together. One day he told her that they were going a long journey, and she must pack up what little things she thought might be useful, and not too heavy, and he should dispose of the rest among his neighbours; which was accordingly done; those who could afford it, paying him for what they took, while the wives of the poorer classes sought to make it up by numberless kind offices and sage advice to the poor motherless child. The house looked so desolate at length, that Lotte was glad to quit it; having first knelt and prayed beside her mother's grave, the only thing she regretted leaving.

For many days they walked straight on by the banks of the river where she used to go and look for amber; resting at night in some lonely hovel. And then, by her grandfather's

instructions, Lotte began to ask the nearest way to the city of Danzig. A great many had never heard of such a place; while others looked compassionately upon the blind man and his little guide, and never thought that either would live to reach the far-off place of their destination. But Lotte was stronger than she seemed, and had a brave heart; while a stern determination of purpose lent fresh energy to the feeble frame of her aged grandfather. Just at first Lotte's feet were sadly cut with the stones, so that she could scarcely manage to limp along by the side of her companion; and was often half tempted to rejoice that he was spared the pain of seeing this, with many things beside that the little child cheerfully endured; but after a time they got hardened, as she called it, and she contrived to get along pretty well. She was obliged to have her wits about her, in order to recollect the various directions she was constantly receiving; and for all that had frequently the mortification of hearing that they had come many and many a weary mile out of the right road. Whole days were often lost thus; while her grandfather's restless impatience at such delays broke wildly forth. Occasionally, too, he was ill for weeks together; and once she thought she should have lost him; but he struggled through it, and they again pursued their sad pilgrimage—sometimes in a canal-boat—sometimes on foot—or assisted by a lift in an empty cart or waggon. As Lotte said, every one was kind to them—who could help being so?—and her grateful heart pronounced it to be a good and beautiful world; adding, with a sweet and simple piety, that, doubtless, God put it into their minds to help her and her poor old grandfather.

She never heard the name of the country from which they originally started, and did not think that the old man knew it either. Neither had she any idea what made him undertake so long and perilous a journey, or what he purposed doing

now that they had at length reached the place of their destination; for he had told her only that very evening, in answer to her inquiries on the subject, that they had no friends at Danzig, or any where else on earth! During their journey they had subsisted almost entirely upon charity; although, as the child said, that need not have been, for she knew that her grandfather had much gold concealed about his person, the produce of the amber which they used to find.

Margaret trembled as she listened to the innocent revelations of her little companion, and felt thankful to Providence for having led them to seek shelter beneath her humble roof; for there were many in the Alt-stadt who would not have scrupled to murder them both for the sake of this same gold of which she spoke with such fearless confidence.

And now Lotte began to wander in her little history; and to talk at random of the old wood where people lost themselves, and where the sun never shone; and of her mother, her gentle, ever-sorrowing mother, who lay buried there, hundreds and hundreds of miles away; and yet, by a strange mystery, might be even now looking down rejoicingly upon her poor wearied child—and so, smiling, and folding her little hands prayerfully together, she fell asleep.

The following day the blind man made arrangements with his kind hostess to remain there for some weeks, in order to recover from the fatigues of their late journey; and truly they both needed rest bad enough. Lotte clapped her little hands for joy when she heard that they were to stay; while the good Margaret, whose heart already yearned towards the little stranger with all a mother's tenderness, felt equally glad that they were not again to be separated, at least for the present. A few days' quiet and careful nursing made Lotte look quite a different being. Her clear blue eyes sparkled with animation, while a faint colour began to steal back to her fair sweet

face. Margaret noticed the improvement to her grandfather, hoping it might induce him to prolong his stay; and the old man, although he said but little, seemed pleased, and still more that she should have found so kind a friend.

For the first few weeks after their arrival, he confined himself almost wholly to his own apartment, except at those hours allotted to exercise; when he might have been seen pacing, or rather loitering up and down the stone-yard belonging to his hostess, with a patient perseverance, muttering to himself the while; but no one paid much heed to what he said. At his own request, and for which he offered to pay handsomely, they lived well; and the old man's sole object seemed to be the recruiting of that failing strength which age and fatigue had well-nigh utterly exhausted. Lotte frequently went out with her new friend, but her grandfather had not hitherto left the house. One evening, however, he proposed that they should walk together as far as the cathedral. Margaret's suggestion that it was almost too late for that, was unheeded; but when Lotte had kissed her, and they had both gone forth, her heart sank within her, and she grew at length so restless and uneasy that she could not keep within doors, but must needs go and meet them on their return.

From constant exercise, Lotte's organ of locality must have been pretty large; but she was puzzled by the command given her to go by the back streets where there were not so many people; her grandfather, meanwhile, carefully concealing his face in his cloak, as though he feared being recognized—a very unlikely thing one would imagine. The consequence of this was that she lost herself more than once, and had to ask her way, at which the old man grew peevish and impatient; and then, forgetting his ill temper as they once again got upon the right track, began to tell her all about the wonderful astronomical clock which they were going to see.

"What a clever man that artist must have been," said Lotte.

"It was the work of a life-time."

"His fellow-citizens doubtless were very proud of him, and rewarded him handsomely for his genius."

The old man laughed aloud; and so wildly, that many turned back wonderingly to gaze upon him; while his grandchild shuddered involuntarily. They proceeded in silence, for she feared to speak again. And the evening twilight began slowly to gather over the city.

"Now we are at the cathedral, grandfather," said Lotte, at length.

"Hark! what was that struck? It must be getting dusk."

"Yes, quite fast; we had better not stay long, or Margaret will be uneasy."

"Just about here," said the old man, without heeding her, "should be a low, arched door."

"Here it is, grandfather."

"Let us knock then, and ask for the keys—and remember that I am no longer blind; I can see as well as you or any one else!—Löttchen, do you heed me, my child?"

"Yes, yes," replied his companion, feeling like one in a strange dream; and so confused by his knowledge of the place, as scarcely to be quite sure herself whether he were blind or not.

The sacristan refused to admit them on account of the lateness of the hour; nor could all the old man's eloquence induce him to alter his resolution.

"You must come again," said he, "by daylight."

"Ah, that is impossible, I am no sight-seeker, but one who has made mechanics the study of his life. It is not the cathedral, but the clock, I wish to see. That wonderful clock, of which I have heard so much!"

"Then you must see it outside."

"No, no," said the old man; "it is the works—the mechanism, I would behold; and I will give you a broad golden piece for every moment that I am permitted to gaze upon them." He drew out a purse as he spoke, the contents of which glittered temptingly in the fading light.

"He must be mad!" thought the sacristan.

"Well, what say ye? We must be quick, for it grows darker and darker every moment." Lotte wondered how her grandfather could tell that, and her little heart beat fast with terror and excitement.

"After all," thought the sacristan, "there can be no harm in gratifying the old man, who is doubtless some half-crazy artist; and there is little fear that he will ever live to rival our great master-piece, even if he should have genius sufficient for the attempt. Even now he seems more like a shadow than a human being. So meanly clad, too, and with all that bright gold!—Heaven preserve us from the evil one!" At this moment his glance fell on the pale, sweet face of the little fair-haired child; at sight of which the superstitious forebodings awakened by the strange appearance of his visitor fled away at once.

"Be it so," said he. "But you must promise not to betray me, or the gratification of your curiosity might be the means of losing me my place."

Lotte, forgetful of his injunction, was about to take her grandfather's hand as usual, to lead him out; but he passed on before, with a rapid step, the sacristan and the child following breathlessly. For some moments after they had ascended, nothing was heard but the quick beating of their own hearts, together with the monotonous ticking of the great clock. It was well the sacristan thought to bring his lamp, for it grew darker and darker every moment. Poor Lotte

felt chilled and frightened, and wished herself safe at home by Margaret's warm, cheerful stove.

"A wonderful piece of mechanism!" exclaimed the sacristan, rubbing his hands, and reckoning up the minutes which had already elapsed, while the old man stood dreamily before the object of his strange curiosity.

"Wonderful!"

"Ah! you may go all over the world without finding such another."

"And yet the artist who made one could surely have made more had he chosen?"

"Yes, if he were alive. But no sooner had he erected this master-piece of genius, in which was concentrated the study of a life-time, than the artist and his daughter suddenly disappeared from Danzig, and have never been heard of since. It created quite a sensation at the time, giving rise to the most wild and fearful rumours; and the mystery has never been solved from that day to this."

"Shall I tell it to you?" asked the old man, still keeping his face carefully averted, and speaking in a hissing whisper, while the trembling Lotte nestled closer to his side. "The house where the artist dwelt was a lonely place, standing apart by itself, far from the busy hum of the city. He loved it for that very quietness; and there was no loneliness within, where his fair widowed daughter and her infant child made the sunshine of the old man's life. The very night of that mysterious disappearance to which you have alluded, it happened, strangely enough, that his two most attached domestics were absent; the one at the bedside of a dying parent, the other on a commission to a distant city, from which it was impossible he could return before the morning; so that there was no one left in the house but an old woman, who was stone deaf, and half stupid beside. The time was

well chosen. The artist slept, and dreamt of fame; when suddenly four men, with black crape upon their faces—he remembers that, for it was the last thing he ever saw—gathered around the bed, and two held him, while the other two put out his eyes!"

"Oh, God! this is horrible!" exclaimed the sacristan; while Lotte sank upon her knees, and buried her face in the old man's robe. "What crime could he have committed to draw down this fearful punishment?"

"None; his genius alone was the cause, the fruits of which they had determined should be theirs only! They feared his making a similar clock for the rival town of Hamburg. But not content with this, or in order to prevent discovery, they bore away the shrieking artist, mad with pain, together with his daughter and her infant child, to a vehicle which stood in readiness; and for weeks afterwards travelled day and night without intermission. God knows where they left them at last—the blind man never did!"

"And does Duringer yet live?" questioned the sacristan.

"He does. After the death of his daughter, whose gentle heart broke in witnessing his sufferings, an irresistible longing seized upon him to return to his native city; and, old, and feeble, and half mad, accompanied only by this little child, he begged his way back to Danzig—I am Duringer!"

The sacristan turned shudderingly away from that sightless countenance, now fully revealed to him for the first time; and letting fall in his terror the lamp which he carried, they were left in total darkness. The darkness and the light were all one to Duringer, who hastily drew forth a pair of scissors, which he had hitherto concealed in his bosom, and severing a single small wire, a dead silence ensued.

"Hark!" exclaimed he, in wild excited tones, that sounded almost like a scream. "It has stopped!—the wonderful

clock!—and will never move again until they give back the old man his eyesight! Ha! ha! the wonderful clock of Danzig!"

"Grandfather!" interrupted Lotte, clinging to him, and weeping bitterly—"dear grandfather! let us go home: it is so cold and dark here!"

Duringer arose up and followed her mechanically. His task was accomplished—he had had his revenge; and now it seemed to recoil upon himself. He had mutilated his own work; and as the mighty heart of that great clock ceased to beat, the heart of its inventor broke! The cutting of that single wire seemed to sever the thread of his own feeble existence; and no human skill could ever restore either the one or the other.

At Lotte's request, who felt frightened at the thought of going alone, the sacristan accompanied them back to their lodgings in the Alt-stadt, where the good Margaret welcomed them with tears of joy, having given up all hope of ever seeing her little favourite again; and leaving them safe under her care, departed without even remembering to demand his promised reward.

That night the artist died; while Margaret, putting the gold carefully aside for the use of his grandchild, who lay stricken with a burning fever, the result of fatigue and over-excitement, buried him decently at her own expense, and was the only mourner who followed the unfortunate Duringer to his lonely grave.

After a time, however, and in spite of many powerful endeavours to the contrary, the fearful truth got abroad, fully corroborated by the testimony of the dying child and the sacristan, as well as the sudden stopping of the clock, which no after-skill has ever been able to repair; and a history somewhat similar to the above is related and believed

in Danzig to this day. We have purposely omitted several marvellous additions concerning a certain spirit, which, it is said, may be still seen wandering restlessly up and down in the vicinity of the silent clock, as though mourning over the ruin it had made; wringing its shadowy hands, and uttering a low wailing sound, like the sighing and sobbing of the wind on a winter's night; and the dark folds of whose tattered cloak is said to conceal only an eyeless skull!—deeming the legend sufficiently touching in itself, without the assistance of the supernatural.

It was given out at the time that the old man was mad, and Margaret and her young charge little better than impostors; but few believed it, and the child's early death only served to deepen the universal sympathy excited by her simple and melancholy history. No clue has ever been discovered to the far-off place of Duringer's exile; although traces of the blind artist and his little guide have been met with from time to time, at a distance so remote from Danzig, that it is a marvel how they travelled so many miles; nor could they, if God, as Lotte said, had not put it into the hearts of his people to be kind to them and help them on their way. The mystery is one which will, in all probability, never be solved on earth; but though the grave of the broken-hearted mother may be thousands of miles away, mouldering beneath the shadow of that dreary wood, where the sun never shines, and the birds keep up a perpetual hymning, it is sweet to think that, through His merits who loved and died for them, they will all meet again in heaven.

SIX DAYS IN THE LIFE OF A LADY-KILLER.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Yes, I am resolved on it, I will keep a diary! I may lay myself open to the imputation of vanity and egotism by so doing, but I undertake to tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," therefore must stand acquitted if my diary prove to be little else than a register of conquests. Not that I am a doughty general, or gouty admiral, "fighting all my battles o'er again;" no, my destructiveness, if I may be permitted the paradox, is of a peaceable description. I am universally admitted to be a lady-killer! Twenty-five years ago, I sent my victims to Clifton, Hastings, and Torquay; now there are greater varieties of cure: one of my despairing damsels is at present bracing her shattered nerves by the cold-water system; another is sleeping away her sorrows under the superintendence of a celebrated mesmeric professor; and a third is wearing a galvanic ring, to console her for the loss of a plain gold one. My principal reason for keeping a diary is, that my friend, John Weybridge, has insinuated several doubts of the reality of the conquests that I have perpetually confided to him. Now John Weybridge is exactly my own age—eight-and-forty; has been married twenty-three years, and has a plump, happy-looking wife, two sons taller than himself, a girl in long ringlets, on the eve of coming out, and a "maiden of bashful fifteen," rubbing off her diffidence at a finishing school. John Weybridge is clearly envious of me; he cannot bear to see me popular with the young and lively, and is constantly urging me to propose to Alice

Grantham, an old flame of mine, who he persists in assuring me is the only woman to whom I was ever really attached, and the only woman who was ever really attached to me. Alice Grantham is five-and-thirty; lady-like, but not a beauty; intelligent, but not a wit: she has certainly a tolerable fortune, and good connections and expectations, but I could never bear to abdicate my sovereignty over scores of hearts to sit down in dulness and domesticity with Alice Grantham. I have told John Weybridge that in the course of a week I shall put this diary into his hands; and I shall say—but no matter what I shall say;—the diary will speak for itself.

Monday.—I dined at Colonel Warburton's, and had not been in the room five minutes before I was remarkably struck with the attention paid to my conversation by Theresa Wingfield, the daughter of one of my intimate friends. I had hitherto considered all my fascinations thrown away upon her, and had even suspected her of the impertinence of conceiving that she was too young at twenty to be flattered by the soft speeches of a man twenty-eight years her senior. To-day, however, she appeared a changed being; she detained me by her side by a succession of animated observations, and when Captain Hesketh (whom I used to consider her favourite flirt) advanced to offer to conduct her to the dining-room, she actually linked her arm, unasked, in mine, to escape from his assiduities. The captain (who, by the way, is a remarkably fine young fellow) looked exceedingly disconcerted at this manœuvre, and contrived to get a seat at table directly opposite his charmer, who, on her part, became more vivacious than ever, for the pleasure of vexing her unfortunate *vis-à-vis*. This, however, I did not quite approve. I do not patronize vivacity; whispering flirtation is always the most effective,

and I lowered my voice, bent my head towards her, and breathed soft phrases into her ear—soft, I mean, in sound, not in substance. I was talking to her of Dr. Ryan's lecture on gun-cotton, and the panorama of the Battle of Sobraon; but by-standers might have concluded, from my look and manner, that I was talking to her about orange-flowers, nightingales, serenades, and honeymoons. When I entered the drawing-room after dinner, Captain Hesketh was persecuting Theresa with his attentions. I immediately advanced to the rescue, and she welcomed me with the utmost delight. I asked her to sing, and her father looked extremely gratified when I led her to the piano. Wingfield is a sensible man, and quite aware of the sort of notice likely to confer distinction on his daughter. I turned over the leaves for Theresa. She sang

"I dreamed that I dwelt in marble halls,"

and looked up at me with a peculiarly tender expression of countenance, when she came to the words

"And I also dreamed, which charmed me most,
That you loved me still the same."

Poor thing! let her not dream of any such contingency; she is much mistaken if she imagines that I am likely to love her, or any other woman, the same for a week together. Captain Hesketh again joined us, and asked Theresa to sing "We may be happy yet," but she declined with much hauteur, and immediately requested of me to accompany her father and herself to the Pantheon Bazaar the next morning. The captain walked away with a sullen brow; and Wingfield, who seemed highly pleased with his daughter's conduct, begged that I would call on them at two o'clock. Theresa gave me a bright glance of satisfaction as I assented: I had never seen her give one so expressive to Captain Hesketh in

his most palmy days of favouritism. Young men must not presume to vie with their seniors in attraction; there is nothing like practice for making perfect. I returned home, and by some strange perversity, dreamed that night—not of Theresa Wingfield, but of—Alice Grantham!

Tuesday.—I walked after breakfast in St. James's Park. An elderly lady, accompanied by a young one, was a few yards in advance of me, and I was struck with the light, agile gait of the latter. Presently she dropped her reticule; I presented it to her; but the clasp flew open before she could receive it, and the path was presently strewn with half-a-dozen pink and straw-coloured notes, an amber scent-bottle, an embroidered pocket-handkerchief, and half-a-dozen other "lady-trifles." Picking them up separately occupied some time; and I clearly saw that the young lady (who proved to be particularly pretty) was much struck with me: she was, in fact, as full of expressions of gratitude to me as if I had rescued her from a runaway horse on the brink of a precipice, or from the attic-story of a house on fire. I ventured to make a few common-place remarks to her (I do myself injustice, however; remarks are never common-place, illustrated by looks and tones like those of Clement Hartington); she responded to them with much spirit, and evident satisfaction; and her elderly companion proved to be the most pliant and accommodating of *chaperons*, for she allowed her young friend to enter into animated conversation with an unintroduced stranger, without a warning whisper, or reproving glance. At length we arrived at a crescent of very handsome, spacious houses, where the young lady informed me she resided. I was greatly surprised; I had no idea, from her exuberant sociability, that she was so nobly provided with a domicile. My adventure quite put me in mind of a passage

in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. Presently she stopped at the centre house—could it be? yes, I was not mistaken! I had never been within it, but it had repeatedly been pointed out to me: it was the habitation of Mr. Radford, a wealthy merchant with an only daughter, a girl possessed of great attractions, whom he introduced into society with exceeding caution and fearfulness; never allowing her to move unless dragonized by his old maiden sister, who abhorred fortune-hunters, and considered every man a fortune-hunter who paid attention to a woman with a fortune. Repeatedly had young men expressed to me their conviction of the unattainability of the fair Miss Radford, who they represented to be demure as a nun, shy as a gazelle, and silent as a younger sister. "What will John Weybridge say to this conquest of mine?" I thought. "I have thawed the frozen snow-ball—I have given life to the statue—nay, I have done much more than this, I have softened and humanized the suspicious maiden aunt." All these reflections passed through my mind while the footman was coming to the door. The elder lady turned to me with a kind smile, and said—"Will you walk in with us?—Mr. Radford is at Liverpool." Here was a delightful piece of intelligence! Mr. Radford was at Liverpool, adding some little instalment to his vast sum-total of wealth, while his heiress and her aunt were beneficently exercising the duties of hospitality to a graceful stranger, who had picked up a reticule for them in St. James's Park! What an illustration of the pretty little after-piece of the Padlock: the coy beauty suddenly becoming as accessible as Leonora—the tyrant aunt as obliging and accommodating as Ursula. Not, of course, that they would so have conducted themselves to any one but myself; the fascination of my appearance and manner had instantaneously thrown down all the barriers of custom, even as the wand of Harlequin dissolves mountains

and icebergs at a stroke! Strong in the consciousness that Mr. Radford was at Liverpool, I followed my conductresses to an elegant morning-room. I made known my name to them, and mentioned the names of several of my friends, who visited occasionally at Mr. Radford's house, and whom the old aunt frankly assured me "she could not bear the sight of." This was highly satisfactory; she knew how to appreciate attractive and engaging manners as well as her niece. We got on remarkably well in conversation, and I almost wished that Mr. Radford would enter the room, that I might try if he would be as suddenly affected in my favour as his "womankind" had been; but presently I reflected that men are very apt to be envious of the superiority of each other, and that perhaps it would be just as well that Mr. Radford should continue at Liverpool a few days longer. At the end of half an hour I took leave, my new divinity courteously saying—"My aunt and myself walk every day in St. James's Park." What an adventure!—what a conquest! Mr. Radford is reported to be worth two hundred thousand pounds; to be a doating father, and to have the highest opinion of the judgment of his sister. What will Tyrrell, Darnford, Bruce, Connolly, and half a score other of my heiress-hunting friends say? And, above all, what will John Weybridge say? Two o'clock came; I called at Wingfield's, and although Theresa is proverbial for impunctuality, I found her exquisitely attired in a becoming walking-dress, and sitting at the window to watch for me. We all proceeded to the Pantheon Bazaar; and on entering the picture-gallery, descried a tall young man standing, with his arms folded, in a pensive attitude, gazing at the picture of Lord Lyttleton and the apparition. We soon recognized him to be Captain Hesketh, and Wingfield looked almost as appalled at the sight of him as if the apparition had walked out of its frame to pay its



respects to us; but he was quickly reassured by the behaviour of his daughter. Theresa received Captain Hesketh with absolute disdain; replied to his remarks with reluctant monosyllables; and returned—yes, actually *returned*—the tender glances which I took the opportunity of directing to her when I saw the poor fellow's eyes fixed on us. A little mortification is very salutary to young men. Presently he wished us good morning in a dejected tone, and walked away. Theresa seemed relieved of an annoyance by his absence, and smiled and talked incessantly; nor had I ever made myself more agreeable. She was evidently exceedingly desirous of securing all my attention to herself, for seeing her father engaged in conversation with an old friend, she proposed to me to descend with her to the conservatory. Of course I complied; I like *tête-à-têtes* in a public place; one is sure to meet some of one's friends, and to be rallied on the subject at a future day. Just as we were passing round the fountain, Captain Hesketh again approached us. I was obliged to bend down my head for a moment, to escape the malice prepense of an ireful cockatoo; and when I raised it, I perceived Theresa with a letter in her hand: it was evident that the enamoured captain had taken that opportunity of forcing it upon her. I was puzzled how to proceed. I cannot bear to enter into quarrels with men, and have escaped them hitherto, even from the kinsmen of my deserted flirts: fathers and brothers cannot call one to account for soft tones and glances, although mothers and aunts are vastly ready to do so. Theresa, however, soon put me at rest by her admirable presence of mind; she did not say a word, but with a look of the most poignant and bitter contempt at the captain, threw the letter on the ground, just as Angelica, in the Constant Couple, dashes on the floor the purse proffered to her by Sir Harry Wildair! He took it up, looking extremely aggrieved and

abashed, and disappeared this time in good earnest. Having met several people of my acquaintance, and displayed to them a remarkably fine girl, hanging confidingly on my arm, and listening to me with the most intense interest, I restored Theresa to her father, and repaired home, perfectly satisfied with the execution of the morning. In the evening I went to a concert at the Hanover-square rooms; and a friend who sat next to me pointed out to my notice an opposite group, and said that he did not know when he had seen so elegant and intellectual-looking a person as the lady in puce-coloured satin. I looked—it was Alice Grantham! Certainly her appearance was excessively engaging. At the end of the first part of the concert, I crossed the room, and spoke to her; she was easy, gentle, and graceful, as usual, and her uncle and aunt were courteous and agreeable. I believe John Weybridge is in the right. I have never seen any one whom I admire and like so much as Alice Grantham; but I cannot bear the idea of being a captive for life; and then her age—five-and-thirty!—what a drawback! Alice Grantham is as completely a being of other days as Alice Grey! I returned home; lay awake a long time; and the last impression on my mind was, that although Miss Radford's blooming cheeks and flaxen ringlets might be very youthful and charming, the dark braided hair and marble cheek of Alice Grantham were fifty times more classical and captivating.

Wednesday.—I called on Mrs. Stretton, a wealthy widow of my acquaintance, whose two pretty daughters I had admitted, some time ago, to the honour of being in love with me. She has a niece residing with her—Miss Berlinton, who is a beauty and a wit, had hitherto treated all my advances very disdainfully; this morning, however, she seemed quite

changed in her manner; she sat sketching in her drawing-book, but ever and anon kept stealing glances at me, while I was making myself particularly agreeable to the youngest and prettiest of the Strettons. At length she could no longer control the feelings that struggled in her bosom. "I never see Mr. Hartington," she exclaimed, "but I feel an irresistible longing to take his likeness!" "My cousin never minds what she says," cried Emma Stretton, evidently exceedingly nervous and jealous at the palpable admiration of the proud beauty. Not making any reply to Emma's remark, I told Miss Berlinton that I should feel most highly honoured in being the subject of her skilful pencil—placed myself in my most picturesque attitude—threw a flood of light into my eyes—summoned an insinuating smile to my lips, and sat with exemplary patience till the young lady had finished her sketch, which, however, she would not suffer me to look at, saying that she must finish and colour it before it would be fit for display. I dined that day with my friend Blakesley; and, in the course of the evening, had plain proof that a lady was added to my catalogue of conquests, whose name I should have been very well pleased to have expunged from thence. I have always avoided flirtations with married women; such things ought to be confined to the Continent. I never in my life directed a shot out of the spinster preserve: the matrons I leave to more adventurous sportsmen. Mrs. Blakesley is a splendid woman, about forty; and has always been considered a model of domestic happiness, and pattern of propriety; but this evening her attention to me was somewhat pointed and peculiar. She asked me twenty questions about my early education, and my college life; and when I made a free confession of all the scrapes and difficulties of the latter, smiled at my recital with the most indulgent kindness. What a change of character! Mrs. Blakesley is generally somewhat

cold and severe. At length the important disclosure came forth. "I am most anxious, Mr. Hartington," she whispered, to have a little private conversation with you; do favour me by calling here to-morrow at three—Mr. Blakesley will be from home!" I bowed assent; but really, really, my fascinations are becoming almost too dangerous. Why am I thus destined to invade the peace of families? And what a terrible reflection is it that I have promised John Weybridge to let him see this diary, and that he will have the character of Mrs. Blakesley in his power. However, I must bear my troubles as patiently as I can. Poor Blakesley! I really feel for him: I shall certainly speak destruction to the lady's hopes, when I keep my appointment to-morrow.

Thursday.—I walked in St. James's Park; met Miss Radford and her aunt, and improved my acquaintance as much as it is possible to do in the course of an hour. I made myself possessed of the young lady's sentiments on the subject of first love, fancy fairs, French poodles, the fashions for the month, poetry, Puseyism, and the polka; and the old lady more than once assured me that her niece and myself seemed to be animated by one heart and soul, and to think alike about everything. Certainly I have walked over the ground in high style, thus to fascinate the shy beauty and her duenna; and yet I do not know—ladies may be *too* accessible. I do not think that Alice Grantham would converse thus freely with a stranger. We parted, a promise having been exacted from me to call at Mr. Radford's house the next day; and I proceeded to poor Blakesley's door, according to my promise to the unhappily infatuated wife. Alas! how unfortunate! half-a-dozen people were in the room, and among them poor Blakesley himself, who had stayed in the house all the morning, expecting a visitor on

business. Mrs. Blakesley looked excessively annoyed; she was pale and dispirited, and poor Blakesley seemed decidedly out of humour. I really feel very much the destruction that I have wrought on their domestic happiness. I outstayed all the visitors, but I could not outstay the master of the house. In the evening the following note was delivered to me from Mrs. Blakesley:—"Come to-morrow, my dear Mr. Hartington, at the same hour; I shall be alone, and shall give orders to be denied to all visitors but you." Very unpleasant! I never received such an unpleasant *billet-doux* in my life!

Friday.—I met Colonel Warburton this morning, evidently fraught with some important piece of intelligence. "Have you heard the news?" he exclaimed, eagerly. "Theresa Wingfield has eloped from her father's house!" I was disposed to utter the American rejoinder, "Not possible!" but merely said—"Surely you must be under a mistake; if she has left her father's house, probably the watermen at Blackfriars or Waterloo Bridge may be able to give some account of her." "What should she jump into the water for?" asked the colonel, impatiently, "of the two follies, that of giving her hand to Hesketh is surely the most excusable." Captain Hesketh!" I exclaimed, "why I was with her only last Tuesday at the Pantheon Bazaar, and saw her return to him with the utmost scorn a letter that he had forced into her hand." "You saw no such thing," said the colonel, laughing derisively; "Hesketh's brother has just told me the whole history. The father of the fair Theresa was suspicious that she gave too much encouragement to Hesketh, and she therefore cleverly contrived to blind him at the dinner-party at my house, by devoting all her attention to you, knowing that he could have no fear of a person of your age being considered

by her in any other light than as a friend of her father. The letter that she threw down to Hesketh the next morning, at the bazaar, was not one that he had given to her, but one that she had written to him, specifying the time and place of the elopement, and which she would have found great difficulty in conveying to him in any other way; she had told him the preceding evening to meet her at the bazaar; was it not an admirably-contrived dodge? But what is the matter with you, Hartington? you don't laugh." Laugh! how could I laugh at the conviction of having been made the tool of a girl? I fancied that I was exciting the envy of her lover by exchanging tender glances with her, and all the time they were of course both ridiculing my folly. This is a most disagreeable entry to make in my diary, and I am afraid will afford a great deal of entertainment to John Weybridge. At three o'clock I called at Blakesley's, and was shown into the drawing-room, where sat Mrs. Blakesley alone, still looking very pallid and sorrowful. "Dear Mr. Hartington," she said, "this is extremely kind of you; I am in very great trouble of mind, and no one can remove it so well as yourself." I inclined my head, and felt excessively awkward. "My husband has a high opinion of your judgment," remarked the lady. I muttered a few disclaiming words. "He is an excellent man," she proceeded with animation, "but somewhat more rigid and scrupulous in his notions than I could wish." So it appears, thought I. "But if you would only talk to him, dear Mr. Hartington," she continued, "in your persuasive, pleasant manner, all might be comfortably arranged." "Might it, indeed?" I said; "that is not quite so likely, I think." "Nay," she replied, "although Mr. Blakesley may be somewhat stern and severe, I still think he is disposed to make allowance for the little failings of those near and dear to him." "I really cannot comprehend you,"

I said, feeling more and more uncomfortable. "Oh!" exclaimed the lady, with a smile, "I forgot that when I was asking you about your college life, the night before last, I was interrupted just as I was going to tell you the reason of my curiosity. Three days ago I received a letter from my dear son, Ernest, who is at the same college at Oxford that you were in—we will not say how many years ago. Ernest has unfortunately incurred several imprudent expenses by mixing with a set superior to his own; and he has also, in more than one instance, shown a blameable neglect of college regulations. It is quite right and ingenuous of him to confess all this, but I have not yet had courage to show the letter to Mr. Blakesley. You are an old friend of my husband's; poor Ernest's misdemeanours are not half so bad as those you revealed to me the other night; now, if you will just break the matter to him, tell him that the college is an expensive one, and that he may see by your own example that very thoughtless young men may sober down into very respectable middle-aged ones, you do not know, dear Mr. Hartington, what a favour you will confer on me." I told the lady, in very few words, that I must decline meddling in family affairs, and took my leave, thoroughly exasperated with the result of my interview. Insolent woman, to dare to tell me that I had been at college "she would not say how many years ago;" to presume to brand me with the disgrace of being a respectable middle-aged man!—this is ten times worse than Theresa Wingfield's elopement, what will John Weybridge say? That evening I was engaged to a large party at Mrs. Stretton's; in the course of the evening I entered a little inner room, dedicated to annuals, albums, and portfolios. Miss Berlinton, who was looking extremely lovely, was displaying something to a group of girls and dandies, which, as I entered, she hastily thrust within a portfolio. "Oh!" exclaimed one of the

attendant nymphs, "do not deprive Mr. Hartington of the pleasure of seeing your likeness of him." "It is not worth Mr. Hartington's attention," said Miss Berlinton, colouring violently. I really felt for her embarrassment, and thought the timidity she displayed was the offspring of newly-born love, for certainly it was not a part of her natural character, and I considered her companions remarkably ill-bred, for they kept up a constant tittering on the subject, which must have been very annoying to her feelings. Presently, a harp sounded from the drawing-room, a professional person was about to sing, and the little room was vacated in a moment. "I seized the glorious golden opportunity," and opened the portfolio to delight my eyes with my own resemblance, traced by the hand of love and beauty. Alas! how was I mortified and horrified! it was a spirited, clever, ill-natured caricature! My tender glance was heightened into a ridiculous ogle; my winning smile into a silly simper. No one could mistake the likeness, and no one but the original could look at it with a grave face. I left the house early, and my dreams were of college duns, runaway couples, and caricatures. It is fortunate that the capital prize in the wheel, Miss Radford, is still unappropriated, otherwise John Weybridge might say that my diary chronicled no great matter of conquests after all!

Saturday.—I walked out, and met my friend Bruce, who had often told me of the charms of Miss Radford, the hauteur of her aunt, and the difficulty of getting a word or a smile from either of them. I could not resist triumphing over him by confiding to him, under a strict seal of secrecy, all my good fortune in that quarter. He listened with an incredulous smile, and, when I had finished, requested that I would just have the goodness to describe to him the person of the young lady. "Surely," I said, "it is needless to tell you that Miss

Radford is a blue-eyed, blooming blonde, with a profusion of fair ringlets." "A remarkable transformation, then," he said, drily, "must have been suddenly wrought in her, for Miss Radford's cheek is almost colourless, and her eyes and hair are those of 'Spain's dark-glancing daughters,' and moreover, I have just received a letter from a friend at Liverpool, who informs me that she, her aunt, and her father, have been staying there during the past week, and will not return to London for several days." "Then, who can I possibly have been walking and talking with?" I exclaimed in a panic-struck tone; "the younger lady certainly addressed the elder one by the title of aunt, and the house to which they conducted me was certainly that of Mr. Radford." "I think," said Bruce, "I know enough of the family tactics to be able to assist you in puzzling out the enigma. Mr. Radford has a housekeeper, a loquacious, comfortable, portly person, who has lived with him many years, and this housekeeper has a niece, a pretty soubrette-looking girl, who is the daughter of a tradesman in the neighbourhood, and is permitted occasionally to pass a few days with her aunt. I can quite believe that these people were delighted to cultivate an acquaintance with one so decidedly in a superior rank of life to their own, but I find it difficult to imagine how you could think it probable that a reserved, retiring young heiress should condescend to pick up a flirt in St. James's Park, merely because he first picked up her reticule (which, by your own account, you did about as awkwardly as the elephant in the Zoological Gardens could have done), and that her grave, vigilant aunt should encourage her forward folly instead of reprobating it. You are not an untrained, newly-caught novice; you are well versed in the usages of society, but the secret of the matter, my dear Hartington, is this—you are insatiably vain, and fancy that you are breaking the hearts

of all the women who listen to your whispers and receive your glances, when in reality you are only exposing yourself to the laughter of your acquaintance; do, my good fellow, throw off this absurd monomania, be content to be a man of sense, and renounce all idea of being a lady-killer." I replied to Bruce's strictures with that short, nervous laugh, which is the most convenient rejoinder to a well-deserved reproof, and went on my way, very much out of spirits, and out of humour. "How should I ever summon assurance to show my diary to John Weybridge? One by one my enamoured ladies had disappeared—Theresa Wingfield, Miss Berlinton, Mrs. Blakesley, Miss Radford—all had vanished like the figures of a phantasmagoria. "Yet," I soliloquised, "I have this consolation, it is only my vanity, not my peace, that is wounded by their indifference; I did not like one of them half so well as Alice Grantham." A happy thought here struck me; I would propose; yes, actually propose to Alice Grantham. I would do it that very day; I felt no doubt respecting her acceptance of me; and I would then go to John Weybridge, tell him what I had done, and at the same time inform him that I had thrown the diary into the fire, not thinking it proper or correct for a married man to parade his conquests. I knocked at the door, Alice was at home, she was alone in the drawing-room, and, strange to say, I who had flirted with a succession of beauties for the last thirty years without ever coming to the point with one of them, now made a plain, straight-forward, unembarrassed proposal of marriage, before I had been five minutes in the room. Alice Grantham looked at me with sweetness, yet with seriousness; she told me candidly that she must decidedly refuse me, but that she did not consider the duties of sincerity could be fully performed by her, unless she also told me that there had been a time when she would most joyfully have accepted me. She

set before me my ungenerous and reprehensible conduct to herself and others, in striving to gain affections merely for the sake of casting them away; she told me that my alternate attentions and slights had cost her many a severe pang, but that now she had happily been enabled to overcome every lingering shade of preference for me, and to feel truly thankful for her escape; with these sentiments, she said, I could not be surprised that she declined committing her happiness to the charge of one whom she deemed so utterly incompetent to promote it. Humbled and ashamed, I quitted the fair Alice Grantham, whose calm and dignified air of superiority convinced me that it was vain to attempt to induce her to reconsider her determination. It has been well observed, that no woman can ever love a man whom she *herself* beholds with contempt, although many love men who are regarded with contempt by others. I am now at home; my diary is in my hand; this last mortification is the crowning trouble of all —how shall I ever dare to show the record of it to John Weybridge? How? why by telling him at the same time that I have learned wisdom from the past, and hope to practise it for the future. I will chronicle no more imaginary conquests; instead of turning over a new leaf in my diary, I will turn over a new one in my life. I will do as Bruce advised me; I will conquer the monomania which degrades me; I will endeavour to be a man of sense, and give up all pretensions to the character of a lady-killer. And now I feel nerved to all that is before me, and am determined to take my diary to John Weybridge this very minute!

A DREAM.

FROM LUDWIG TIECK.

BY R. MONCKTON MILNES, ESQ.

"WELL, well, gentlemen," said the old man, "you may laugh on, you may stare, but it is only too true that the real personal Devil is continually on the watch for an opportunity to take me away with him, sometimes by fair means and sometimes by foul, and sometimes so that I find myself all at once in his clutches, without in the least knowing how I got there. The first time the thing happened to me was, perhaps, the most remarkable of all. It may now be thirty years ago; I was still a bachelor, for I married only late in life. I was at Berlin at the time, and my whole soul was occupied with the gaieties of the carnival, with operas, plays, and balls. I dreamt I was coming out of the opera-house, where there was a violent crowding, jostling, and hallooing, as usual. The night was pitch-dark, with the red torches flashing in the midst of it. The carriages came rattling up, and people were getting into them in all directions. I called for my coachman; but while I stood there engrossed with the echo of the music in my ears, with the cries of the servants and soldiers, and with the smoke of the torches, some one, whom I do not rightly recognise, lifts me into a coach; the door is banged to; a footman, who seems strange to me, springs up behind, and we pass at full speed over the small bridge; then over the broader one, towards the great front of the Palace. On a sudden, as we do not turn the corner, the black mass of the Palace breaks in two, and we rattle furiously through the

middle of it down the Königstrasse, where I had no intention whatever of going. Now we are in the open air, but I have no notion where. All is dark, but for the torches of my servants, who whisper and laugh behind. I am seized with terror, as the black horses gallop still more madly. It is no longer running, it is flying—it is shooting; it is like a bird—like an arrow—like a bullet. Now I grow conscious that I am in the power of infernal spirits. We are already among tremendous rocks; from all sides black spiked crags jut inwards, savage and threatening. We rush through an immense stone arch, and the instant the horses have sprung beyond it, the granite wall falls in behind with a tremendous crash. The same happens with a huge iron gate, and every door I am carried through closes forcibly. Every moment the scene is more lonely and more still. The servants behind the carriage have disappeared; the horses grow fewer, and at last I am drawn by only one. Now comes another vault of rock, dark and endless—this, too, breaks down behind me, and falls into a thousand pieces. The carriage shoots down a precipice; I fall, and all about me has vanished. I find myself lying in a small narrow space, all sand and gravel; behind me are perpendicular cliffs—before me a mournful waste—and now I know that I am damned. No monsters are here—no images of fire—no Hell and Satan, such as legendary fancy paints, but something far more terrible. There is the distinct sense that no thought, no memory, no consciousness, can penetrate through all those barring masses to the Father of Love; that no impression can pass from Him to me; that He has forgotten me; and that a loss of my very faculties, a conscious impotence, makes it impossible for me ever again, through all eternity, with the slightest fibre of perception, with the faintest, simplest, most infantine mental act, to find my way to my Redeemer!

So horrible was this sensation that I yearned heartily for the presence of devils and the tortures of the reprobate, if only that in the presence of other beings, in horrors, and agonies, and howlings, I might find some relief and distraction from this most hideous solitude.

I woke at last; but this feeling still pursued me the whole day long. I believed that I could master my illusion; I accused myself of madness. I tried to laugh at the thought that God could forget me or any being whatever. But the enormous truth of what I had experienced in my dream overpowered all the consolations that reason could afford me. And was, then, my barren, thoughtless life of this and every day anything else but that which sleep had revealed to me? This babbling in insipid company, this frequenting of vapid societies, this chattering and chatter-hearing, this toil of pleasure, this continual escape from every higher and better state of feeling, this libertinism in the presencc of bad men, where I have so often belied myself, and tried to appear manly and strong-minded, by treading under foot the principles of my education and the fairest remembrances of my childhood—what other effect has all this disorder of existence but to close one door after another behind me with bars of iron—to build up towers of impenetrable rock between me and the Eternal? Thus was I already quite as lonely as in my dream, however much I still knew of Him, however graciously He still inclined himself towards me. Yet in this was I inexpressibly happy, that still again I could come to Him, that I was still alive, that I had still about me the faculties I owed to His goodness; and thus was this strange vision the occasion of my fashioning out for myself a wiser and nobler course of life.

SCANDAL.

TWO SKETCHES OF SOCIETY.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

Among the besetting evils of our day, not one is more prevalent than scandal. A casuist might search whether this evil originated in "envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness," or in the habit of gossiping induced by idleness. But for our own part we are inclined to attribute it to the last. If, as the old proverb has it, idleness be the mother of mischief, scandal surely is the offspring of idleness, and three, if not four, portions of the false reports circulated in society owe their existence and promulgation to it. Those who endeavour to kill their own time, and consume that of others, by morning visits, are aware that a piece of news, and the more piquant the better, serves as a passport to insure a welcome even in houses whose owners are not ill-natured nor malicious. Tired of the monotony and inanity of a life without rational occupation, aught that creates even a momentary excitement is well received, because it banishes for a brief time the lassitude of mind and *ennui* that never fail to spring from idleness. Hence those who bestow their tediousness on their acquaintances are glad to have something novel to relate, and, in their desire for this stimulant, sometimes erect a superstructure of scandal on a basis of fiction, careless what injury it may inflict on others. In the anxiety of these gossips to collect news, they eagerly grasp at whatever may have the appearance of furnishing it. A word that can be turned to a different meaning from that intended by the speaker; nay,

even a look, smile, or gesture, may be converted to account by indefatigable hunters of news; and the receivers, careless of the truth, supply by their imaginations the discrepancies of the story related. It is an old but true saying, that "no tale loses in the carriage." By every vehicle through which scandal is conveyed it gains weight, until it assumes a formidable appearance, and becomes more difficult to be defeated. Ask the propagators of scandal, whether they believe the stories they repeat, and they will, for the most part, tell you that they have not taken the trouble to examine into the truth. The fact is, the same habit of idleness that leads them to listen to and repeat such tales, prevents their ascertaining whether they are false or true, and so the report gains ground without any peculiar malice in those who spread it, until it reaches the individuals most interested, who are sure to be the last to hear it. For the cure of this besetting evil, rational occupation is the best we can recommend. A mind usefully employed will never thirst for news, and never desire to propagate it. The *ennui* resulting from idleness will be banished with the malady itself, and gossip and scandal will cease to be the bane of society. The following pages are meant to illustrate this hypothesis, and record the scandal of idle ladies and gentlemen.

FEMALE GOSSIPS.

"My daughter has just run off," said Lady Melcombe to Mrs. Fordinglass, as the latter lady entered her drawing-room to pay a visit, but the door opening a second time to admit other visitors, the hostess put her finger to her lip as a sign for silence, and said, "Hush, not a word at present."

Mrs. Fordinglass eyed Lady Melcombe with undissembled astonishment as she marked the self-control she exercised while receiving her visitants under such a trying position.

Not a single symptom of the chagrin which a mother must feel on such an occasion could be detected in her ladyship's countenance, which wore the same calm and unruffled aspect that generally distinguished it. "She must be a perfect actress," thought Mrs. Fordinglass to herself, "or else she is strangely deficient in maternal affection. But I suppose she is playing a part to conceal the elopement at present. But why tell it to me?" was the next question that suggested itself. "*N'importe*," thought Mrs. Fordinglass, "this *is* a piece of news worth knowing, and that will make me welcomed wherever I visit this morning." So impatient was she to reveal this intelligence, that finding the other ladies had no intention of departing, she took leave, although longing to know all the particulars of the elopement, and the name of the partner of Lady Emily's flight. She drove to the Dowager Lady Bertram's, where she found six or seven of her ladyship's female friends repeating the *on-dits* of the day, and hardly gave them time to finish their piquant anecdotes, before, shaking her head gravely, she announced that she had very painful intelligence to relate. "Pray tell us," said one lady; "Do, my dear madam," exclaimed another; "I am positively dying to hear it," added a third; until the whole circle joined in entreaties to be told the painful event which Mrs. Fordinglass had to communicate. "No, ladies, you never could guess it," said that stately matron, pleased at the importance with which she found herself invested, by the excited curiosity and love of gossip of the women around her. "And had I not heard it from her mother's own lips, I could not have believed it," added she.

"Whose mother?"

"Who is the person?"

"Pray don't keep us any longer in suspense," said all the ladies at once.

"I don't know whether I am justified in telling it," observed Mrs. Fordinglass, looking more self-important than ever. "I am not given to repeat anything told me in confidence, and I should not like to be quoted as having been the first who revealed this painful affair."

"Then why name it at all?" said one of the dowagers.

"Yes, why excite our curiosity?" observed another; and all looked reproachfully at Mrs. Fordinglass.

"Well, ladies, if you will give me your words of honour—mind, your *solemn* words of honour—that it shall go no further, I will tell it."

"As if we would repeat it!" said one, half offended.

"You may rely on us," murmured another; while all pledged their words of honour, without ever intending to keep them or the secret.

"You must know, then," said Mrs. Fordinglass, assuming an air of grave importance, "that I went to call on Lady Melcombe an hour ago. I thought I observed a sort of confusion and embarrassment in the countenances of the servants in the hall. The groom of the chambers seemed doubtful about announcing me, and when I entered, Lady Melcombe—poor woman, my heart bleeds for her—seemed dreadfully agitated. Before I had time to say a single word to her, she exclaimed, 'My daughter has just eloped!' Other visitors being at that moment announced, she held her finger to her lip, and, with an expression of agony not to be described, whispered, 'Hush!'"

"What! Lady Emily?"

"Is it possible?"

"Well, how strange!" exclaimed the ladies.

"Who would have dreamt of such a thing?"

"I confess *I* am not so *very* much surprised," observed one. "I always thought that there was something very odd about her."

"Yes, she always struck me as being very prudish," said another; "and prudes, you know, are not to be trusted."

"Prudish!" reiterated a third, "well, for my part, I always thought her anything but prudish. I considered her a regular coquette."

"Her mother is much to be blamed," observed one of the ladies.

"Do you think so?" said another. "I should rather say she was much to be pitied."

"It must be a severe blow to her," remarked a third, "for she had very ambitious views for her daughter, who, notwithstanding all the fuss people made about her, was not so superior to other girls as her mother imagined."

"For my part, I never envy those who have what are termed beauties for daughters," said Lady Mertonville, whose daughters were proverbially plain; "something disagreeable always happens to them."

"Well, I confess that I like handsome young women," observed one of the speakers, "they go off better in marriage than plain ones—unless, indeed, these last are very rich."

"*They go off, indeed,*" responded Lady Mertonville, spitefully, "as witness the case in point; but few mothers would wish for such going off as this."

"Of course I did not mean it in that sense," replied Mrs. Vernon.

"But who is the man, the partner of Lady Emily's flight?" demanded Lady Bolton.

"Yes, pray who is the man?" was repeated by several voices.

"Lady Melcombe did not tell me. Visitors, as I mentioned, dropped in and interrupted her communication."

"And you came away without knowing his name?"

"How could you?"

"Really, one might as well know nothing as not know all."

"How provoking!" was uttered in various tones of disappointment by the different ladies; while Mrs. Fordinglass lost all her importance in their eyes, the moment she could no longer minister to their curiosity.

"I think I could name the man," said Lady Bertram.

"Name! name!" was echoed from half-a-dozen voices.

"What do you say to Sir Henry Murray?"

"What! that wild *roué?*"

"I never saw *him* paying her any marked attention," observed one of the ladies.

"*Raison de plus,*" said another; "persons who intend to elope don't exhibit their *tendresse* before society."

"I strongly suspect that young Herbert is the man. I've seen him dance with her often, and ride with her in the park; and, as he is said to be ruined, he may have been tempted by her fortune (she is rich, you know) to secure it, knowing, as he must have done, Lady Melcombe would never consent to the marriage."

"People said that the Duke of Portobello was rather smitten with her," observed Lady Bolton.

"Be assured he never was. *I* know where *his* wishes pointed. But the Melcombes wanted to make people believe he was a suitor for Lady Emily's hand," said Lady Mertonville.

"There you are wrong," interrupted Lady Mortimer, a simple-hearted old lady without daughters; "for, having heard the report, I asked Lady Melcombe some months ago if it were true, and she positively denied it."

"And in a manner, I strongly suspect, to make you think it true," remarked Lady Mertonville.

"A faint denial always has that effect," observed one of the ladies.

"I said she POSITIVELY, and NOT faintly, denied it," re-

sumed the old lady; "and what's more, I can't even now bring myself to believe that Lady Emily *has gone off;* so steady, so dutiful, did she always appear to be."

This defence only excited the ill-nature of the ladies still more; and they proved it, by naming every young man in the circle of fashion, as being likely to be the partner of Lady Emily's flight, each alleging that she had seen or heard something of the marked attentions of these individuals to the young lady.

"How strange!" observed Lady Mortimer. "You all name as many *prétendants* for the hand of Lady Emily as if she were the greatest coquette in London, while I, who go a great deal into society, have never seen her receive marked attention from any man, although she commanded the respectful admiration of all."

"Prudes never do receive attention in public," said Lady Mertonville.

"Yet you have all maintained having seen or heard of poor Lady Emily's receiving marked attentions from, heaven only knows how many men," retorted Lady Mortimer, reproachfully.

"The girl is not so much to be blamed, as I said before," remarked Lady Bolton.

"The mother is the person most in fault," said Lady Mertonville; "I always considered her a very weak woman, and this event proves I was right."

And now a warm discussion ensued relative to which, the mother or daughter, were more deserving of censure. Many were the cutting sarcasms pronounced on both, until the circle broke up, the visitors being impatient to give circulation to the news, imperfect though it was, which they had learned, and anxious to obtain the name of the partner of Lady Emily's supposed elopement. So active were their exertions,

that before the evening the report was spread half over the town, and as many different versions of it given as the fertile imaginations of the repeaters could furnish. Many persons who had hitherto extolled Lady Melcombe, and with reason, as one of the most excellent mothers, and her daughter as a charming, amiable girl, were now heard to censure both with the utmost severity, and to proclaim that *they* had always thought lightly of mother and daughter, though they had out of pure good-nature forborne to say so.

Those, and they were not numerous, who attempted to defend these ill-used ladies, were laughed at as simpletons, who knew nothing of the world; and, at the clubs, the reputation of one more female victim was offered up to propitiate the minotaur of scandal, which but too frequently haunts them for prey. Many were the cards left at Lady Melcombe's door that day by *soi-disant* friends, anxious to hear the particulars of the elopement; and as she and her fair daughter had driven into the country to see a friend, it was charitably supposed that the mother, finding she could no longer conceal the sad truth, had given orders to be denied to visitors.

A splendid *bal costumé* was to take place that night at the Duke of Portobello's. Rumour had been for several days proclaiming the preparations making for this fête, the magnificence of the dresses to be worn, and the costliness of the jewels. Expectation was on tiptoe. The *invited* talked with rapture of the anticipated pleasure; the *uninvited* wondered, or at least professed to wonder, how people could attach such importance to a mere fancy ball. The vast and splendid suite of drawing-rooms at Portobello House, light as day, from the countless thousands of wax candles that illuminated them, were reflected in lofty mirrors, extending from the gilded ceilings to the richly-carpeted floors. The rarest exotics and most fragrant flowers were scattered in

abundance through the suite of apartments, which, celebrated for the splendour of their decorations and furniture, never appeared more brilliant than on this occasion, when Lady Melcombe and her lovely daughter, escorted by the Duke of Portobello, walked through the crowd. Every eye turned on them; surprise, wonder, and doubt, were expressed in many faces, but few denoted satisfaction at this irrefragable proof of the falsehood of the rumour of the day. There was an air of quiet triumph in the face of Lady Melcombe, and of blushing happiness in that of her daughter, that puzzled, nay more, displeased all those who had been circulating the evil report of them so few hours before. As Lady Melcombe glanced around, her eye met that of Mrs. Fordinglass, who stood near.

"I was interrupted, *chère dame*," whispered she, "when this morning I told you that Emily had just run off. The truth was, she ran out with her *futur* by one door as you entered by the other. I thought you might have caught a sight of them, and I wished to explain that she had put on her costume for to-night, to please the duke, who wished to see it; they are to be married shortly, as I suppose you may have heard, and this fête is given as a *galanterie* to her, dear girl, on the occasion of announcing the approaching nuptials. The duke wished their engagement to be first declared here, so I did not like to speak of it before the visitors who broke in on us."

Mrs. Fordinglass was ready to sink to the earth; but not with self-reproach or shame. No, she only feared the consequence of her circulating the rumour might be an expulsion at no distant day from the magnificent festivities of Portobello House, while of its result to others she was careless. Those who had spread the false report declared to each other that *they* had never for a single instant believed it, and wondered

how Mrs. Fordinglass, who must be a dangerous person, could circulate such a mischievous falsehood. The marriage was celebrated with great splendour a few days after. Lady Melcombe was pronounced to be the most excellent, as well as most fortunate, mother in the world, and the Duchess of Portobello the most perfect daughter. It is true that, many years after, people used to say, when the name of the duke or duchess was mentioned, "They eloped, did they not?" or, "There were some odd stories about them before they were married;" and then others shook their heads, and said, "They did not quite remember particulars, but there was something about an elopement, some strange story, which they had now forgotten."

MALE GOSSIPS.

"You have heard of my son's robbery," said Sir Thomas Arlingham to Mr. Melville, whom he chanced to meet in the street, as he closed his own door, his mind full of the circumstance, which had only the previous night occurred. Now be it known to my readers that the said Mr. Melville was rather remarkable for an obtuseness of comprehension, as well as for a love of gossiping; the result of which the sequel of my story will prove. Before the worthy baronet had time to finish the sentence he had commenced, a mutual acquaintance, big with some piece of political news of importance, which he longed to communicate, joined the pair, and dashing at once boldly into the subject of which he was full, prevented the completion of the history of the robbery, and the parties separated without recurring to it. Mr. Melville went to his club, and finding some ten or a dozen of his acquaintances there, shook his head ruefully, and said, "I've heard something very painful just now."

"What is it?" demanded more than one voice.

"I suppose it can't be a secret," replied Mr. Melville; "for his own father told me of it."

"Told you of what?" inquired one of the men.

"I knew that the young man was rather wild," resumed Mr. Melville; "that is, I heard so more than once; but I had no notion that he could be guilty of robbery."

"Who the deuce are you talking of, Melville?" demanded another of the party.

"Of young Arlingham."

"Young Arlingham! You must be dreaming, or mad, to assert such a thing."

"I beg to say I am neither," replied Mr. Melville, dryly. "But not more than half an hour ago I met Sir Thomas Arlingham in the street, and he told me of it."

"You don't mean to say that Sir Thomas Arlingham, one of the most honourable, as well as one of the proudest men in England, would stop you in the street to tell you that his son, his only son, Harry Arlingham, one of the finest fellows alive, had committed a robbery?" said Lord Wallthorpe.

"I mean what I said, and what I repeat," replied the obtuse and now irritated Melville.

"Then to prove my conviction of the utter impossibility of Harry Arlingham's committing such a crime, I will bet you one hundred, nay more, five hundred pounds, that he never did."

"I never lay wagers," replied Melville, "but on this occasion I am willing to accept yours, for one hundred, that his father told me he had."

"Done," said Lord Wallthorpe.

"I think you are rash," observed Sir Henry Winstanley.

"Young Arlingham is a very extravagant young dog, and extravagance leads to strange things," said a cynical-looking man.

"And he plays high," added another of the circle; "and

at play, you know the old adage, '*On commence en étant dupe, et on fini en étant fripon.*'"

"Why, it was only last week he paid five hundred pounds for a pair of carriage horses," said another member of the club.

"*Paid*, did you say?" observed the cynical-looking man, shaking his bald head. "I heard he had *bought* the horses; but *buying* and *paying* are very different things."

"But how absurd it is of the old goose of a father to go round the town exposing his son!" remarked another man, who laid down the newspaper he had been reading to make this observation

"If fathers told all the misdoings of their sons, we should have some pleasant stories," said Sir Henry Winstanley.

"And *vice versâ*, if sons told all the selfishness and hardness of hearts of their governors, by Jove, we should have some astounding histories," observed Lord Wallthorpe.

"So it ever was and ever will be," said an old man with spectacles, who had as yet not joined in the conversation. "Fathers and sons are natural enemies. The father looks on his heir as the person who is to jostle him off his chair long before he is disposed to resign it, which led to the clever old Frenchman accounting for the love that grandfathers bear their grandchildren, by saying, '*Il sont les ennemis de nos ennemis.*'"

"Devilish good."

"Very true."

"Capital," broke from several lips.

"But to resume," said the man in spectacles. "Sons, on the other hand, think that fathers are very unreasonable who live beyond fifty, to keep them out of the estates they are impatiently longing to possess."

"Men are great blockheads who marry young, and find

themselves, while yet in the prime of life, elbowed by a son who keeps his hunters, *et Dieu sait quoi* beside, and expects the old governor, as he terms a father of forty-four, to pay his debts every two years," observed one of the circle.

"And I think men much greater blockheads who wait until they are come to an age to require nurses instead of wives, and select some unhappy, portionless young creature to watch over their infirmities, and pray for their speedy release from them," replied Sir Henry Winstanley.

"That comes from old men settling large jointures on their wives," remarked the man with spectacles. "If they would make the extent of the jointure contingent on the number of years they were to survive their marriage, their youthful wives would not desire their deaths, but would, *au contraire*, become anxious to prolong their existence."

"What a bad opinion you must have of women!" said Lord Wallthorpe.

"That's because he has lived with only the worst species of the sex," rejoined another speaker. "Depend on it, when a man abuses women it always proceeds from this cause."

"You, then, we may presume, who frequent only the society of ladies of fashion, entertain a high opinion of the sex," replied the man with spectacles, rather spitefully.

"Yes, I *do* estimate women most highly. I learned to think well of them from witnessing the conduct of my mother, and my sisters, brought up under her care," resumed the former speaker, warmly. "And I think a man who abuses the sex insults his mother, his sisters, and his wife, if he possesses one."

"It is not every man who is so chivalrous as you; and if women—that is, what you call the estimable portion of them—won't let men into their society *en déshabillé*, as we dine at our clubs, or allow us to smoke, or visit them in the

dress we have been smoking in, what the devil are we to do but seek those who are not so particular?"

"Those men who would not willingly make the sacrifice—a poor one, heaven knows, it is—of dressing like gentlemen to appear before ladies, and of resigning a filthy and disgusting habit for the sake of refined society, are not worthy of it; and I should entertain but a poor opinion of women who were so wanting in self-respect as to permit men into their presence in the dishabille of the clubs, and exhaling the abominable odour of cigars."

At this period of the discussion, which was becoming more animated, Sir Thomas Arlingham entered the room. He approached the circle, and had scarcely returned the greetings of his acquaintances, when he said, "Have you heard of my son's robbery?" Mr. Melville looked around triumphantly, and then nodded to Lord Wallthorpe, as if to say, "You see I have won." "You must know that last night, while Harry was taking a warm bath, and had left his watch, keys, and purse, on the table in his dressing-room, some robber entered, took possession of the watch and purse, and walked off with them, taking also his writing-box, in which were some eighty or a hundred pounds. One of the housemaids met the rascal on the stairs going down, and questioned him, when he said he had come by Mr. Arlingham's orders to take the writing-box to have the lock repaired, so she let him go away. How he got into the house no one can tell; but we have had the officers from Bow-street, and they will find it out, I dare say."

Mr. Melville arose, looking particularly sulky, and whispering Lord Wallthorpe, "I owe you a hundred," walked out of the club, followed by the suppressed laughter of the circle, which caused Sir Thomas Arlingham to say, "I can't comprehend why you should all laugh at my son's robbery."



THE GRAND STAIRCASE OF THE CHAMBER OF PEERS, PALACE OF THE LUXEMBOURG.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

With mind intent on mighty cares of state,
A nation's weal absorbing every thought,
The monarch leaves the chamber where his peers
In grave debate have met to canvass o'er
Subjects of vast import. Ah, little deem
Those who behold at distance mighty kings
Surrounded by the splendour of a court,
In stately palaces with gilded domes,
And all the gauds of pageantry that wait
On him whose brow is circled by a crown,
How few the hours of peace and rest *he* knows,
Whom millions gaze on, envious of his lot!
And if some intervals of bliss he owns,
To soothe the sleepless cares of sov'reignty,
They spring from pure domestic love alone
(A boon so rarely yielded to a king),
Which brings oblivion of the power he wields.
Bless'd with a wife whose virtues lustre lend
To the bright diadem that binds her brow,
Offspring of which e'en kings might well be proud,
And an affection which can bless the home,
Where he may sometimes dream he is not king,
Gives strength to meet the heavy weight of care
That monarchs are decreed by Fate to bear.

A ROMANCE OF RONDA.

BY MRS. ROMER.

The inhabitants of the mountains of Ronda still bear evident traces in their moral and physical qualities of the admixture of Moorish blood, which, during the long period of the Arab domination in Spain, was so largely infused into the veins of the conquered people of the southern portions of the Peninsula. They are daring and courageous—devoted to those they love; but at the same time obstinate and vindictive, never forgiving an injury, and pursuing the infliction of one with vengeance which too often ends in bloodshed. The mountaineers are at once active and indolent; preferring the exciting perils of occasional *contrabandista* adventures to the prosecution of some more regular and creditable branch of industry; but there are exceptions to this lawless rule, and when a native of Ronda turns his mind seriously to business, the energy of his character enables him to succeed in the teeth of difficulties which mere plodding patience could never surmount.

Of this latter description was Isidro Valdes, one of the most prosperous proprietors in the immediate vicinity of the little mountain city of Ronda. He possessed an excellent habitation in the town, and a flourishing farm in the environs; his breed of horses, and of game-bulls, were in greater estimation than those of any other proprietor in the mountain; he was handsome, amiable, and only twenty-four years of age. His dark countenance possessed all the animation and regular beauty, and his slight, well-knit form all the symmetry and

grace, for which the Andalusians are celebrated; and never was Majo dress worn by one who so happily knew how to draw a line between elegance and coxcombry—dash and swagger; a distinction rarely understood by the bully beaux of Andalusia. All that was wanting to render his happiness complete, was a wife; and with his natural advantages, that want was easily supplied. His choice fell upon a young girl of Ronda of his own class, more richly endowed by nature than by fortune; but as he was wealthy enough to marry a portionless bride, and too disinterested to make money the chief end of matrimony, he did not suffer that objection to interfere with his wishes. He tendered his hand to the fair Carmen Diaz, and was accepted by her and her family with every demonstration of satisfaction.

The marriage was to be celebrated at the period of the fair of Ronda, when the town is one scene of bustle and gaiety from morning till night, and the population of all the villages in the mountains, as well as many English officers from the garrison of Gibraltar, and gentry from the more distant cities of Andalusia, flock into Ronda to attend the bull-fights, which form the great attraction of the period, and always draw thither the most celebrated *toreadors* of Spain. At those times Isidro's house generally afforded hospitality to some of the English strangers whom the scanty accommodations of the Ronda *posadas* would otherwise have condemned to sleep *à la belle étoile;* and they fared so comfortably in his cool, clean chambers, that those who had once been his guests always sought to return to him. One of these, more especially, an officer attached to the medical staff at Gibraltar, was as often led thither by his regard for Isidro as by his partiality for the sports of Ronda. Mutual benefits had been conferred of a nature to create no common regard between them, and in a measure to neutralize their difference of station. Doctor W. had

saved Isidro's life during the dreadful period of the cholera—Isidro had rescued the Englishman from the hands of some of those desperate bandits who infest the mountains of Andalusia; and thus, when the young man had decided upon becoming the husband of Carmen, he despatched a letter to his friend, to apprize him of the coming event, and to solicit his presence at the marriage ceremony.

"I am, as you know, an orphan," he wrote to him, "and have not even any near relations living; but since a fortunate chance has bestowed upon me such a friend as yourself, I feel that I do not stand alone. Come then, señor doctor, and replace the father and the brothers I have lost—come and witness the event that is to ensure the happiness of my future life. To all other guests but yourself my house will be closed during the period of the approaching fair."

The invitation was accepted with all the warmth that had dictated it; and on the day previous to the one that had been fixed upon for the wedding, the doctor arrived at Ronda. He was received by his young host with a countenance beaming with the happiest hopes, and the first words addressed to him, after those of welcome, were an assurance of the ineffable contentment of his heart.

"I see that you are desperately in love," observed his friend.

"In love! oh, doctor! if you knew my Carmen—but you will soon behold her—you would understand my transport. Yes, I am marrying her for love alone. She possesses nothing but that which surpasses all the wealth in the world, and which gold could never buy—beauty and grace that intoxicate the senses—goodness and purity that captivate the soul! Such are her perfections, that I scarcely dared to hope she would have accepted me."

"What! young, rich, and handsome as you are, you scarcely dared to hope?"

"Ah!" replied Isidro, "you know not all. It is because——" Then suddenly checking himself, he stammered a few incoherent words, and became silent.

His friend discreetly forbore to question him further, and the conversation soon took another turn. The chamber Doctor W. was in the habit of occupying, next to that of his host, had been prepared for him; and after a *tête-à-tête* dinner with Isidro, he pretexed some visits among the early *tertulias* of his fair friends at Ronda, and went out in order to leave the young man at liberty to pass the evening with his betrothed. At half-past eleven he returned to the house, and was preparing to retire for the night, when Isidro entered his room, pale and agitated, and threw himself upon a chair by his side.

"What is the matter with you?" inquired the doctor; "are you ill?"

"No!" was the brief reply.

"Have you had a lover's quarrel, then?"

"No, no!" he repeated. "But, good God! who would have thought that——"

"Speak out, Isidro; open your heart to me—surely I have a right to your confidence."

"You have," said Isidro, pressing the doctor's hands; "and you shall know all. This evening I went to the house of the Viada Juana Diaz, Carmen's mother, where all the family were assembled. Carmen watched her opportunity, and at a moment when her mother and her brother were both so occupied as not to observe her, she whispered in my ear—'Isidro, will you be at home to-night, and alone, at midnight?' 'Of course I shall,' I replied, astonished at the question. 'Well then,' she resumed, 'send your servants out of the way, and I will go to your house at that hour. When you hear three light taps at the door, open it yourself, and let me in, for I

must see you alone before to-morrow.' And then," continued Isidro, "she turned away, and before I could stop her, she was in the midst of her guests; and it was impossible for me to address a word to her that would not have been overheard by them. And now, señor doctor, what do you think of this strange proceeding? A virtuous young girl, as timid as she is modest, to steal out of her mother's house at midnight, in order to come clandestinely to her lover's, when only a few hours more will confer upon her the right of entering it openly! What mystery can be hidden under such an undertaking?"

"Do you believe that she loves you?" inquired the doctor.

"As truly as I love her; she has sworn it to me a thousand times."

"Tranquillize yourself, then; she can mean nothing that will afflict you. You will only have to listen to some girlish confidence from one who has already more reliance on you than on her mother."

"No, no!" exclaimed Isidro; "some storm is impending—some fatal secret remains to be revealed, that will prevent our marriage. But, no! nothing shall prevent it! Rather would I die a thousand deaths than relinquish the fond privilege of becoming Carmen's husband." Then, after a pause of some minutes, during which he paced up and down the room in the greatest agitation, he resumed: "Doctor, you are a friend sent hither by Providence to support me in this trial; you must hear all that passes between Carmen and myself, but unseen by her. Place yourself against that hanging, which masks one of the little Moorish arches that pierce the wall between my room and your's; you will be able distinctly to hear every word that passes between us, and will thus become acquainted with the powerful motive that leads Carmen to

take so singular a step. Seat yourself there, extinguish the lights, and, above all, make no movement that can betray your near vicinity. I must now go down stairs and watch for her coming."

A few minutes afterwards Doctor W. heard the two young people enter the adjoining room precipitately, and close the door after them. The first words uttered were rendered indistinct by the sobs of the young girl.

"You are astonished," said Carmen, at last; "you ask why I come to your house in the middle of the night, like one guilty or mad? It is because I love you, Isidro, and because I will not marry you!"

At this unexpected declaration, Isidro uttered a cry of indignation.

"Listen," continued Carmen, gently, but firmly, "I will not marry you! You must fly—you must quit Ronda immediately! My heart would have broken had any one but myself forced you to this fatal separation, or had I not been able to tell you—to swear to you—that it is because I love you better than myself, that I refuse to become your wife!"

Speechless with emotion—indignant at what he supposed to be a heartless mystification—Isidro remained standing before Carmen, unable either to interrupt or to reply to her strange declaration. The young girl drew him towards her, and forcing him to place himself on the same arm-chair which she occupied, she passed her arm round his neck, and continued: "We are both very young, Isidro, and very inexperienced; because we have been absorbed in our mutual love, we have believed that there is nothing but love in the world. Instead of which, another time of life, and other interests, bring with them other passions. Remember your father and mine, and think what your fortune is compared with ours."

"Well?" ejaculated Isidro, gasping—"well?"

"Well, my beloved," replied Carmen, "those rich pasture lands, which constitute so great a part of your wealth, formerly belonged to my father. They were to have been my marriage portion, they were my mother's fortune, and ought to have become the patrimony of my brother José."

"Yes, Carmen, I know it; those lands belonged to your family, but your father owed money to mine far beyond their value; and if they have now become my property, it was because my father consented to accept them as a very insufficient compensation for the sums due to him."

"You are right, Isidro; but everything relating to that transaction is calculated to wound my mother's feelings—the debt itself, and the way in which it was paid. But that is not all. There is blood between our two families; and whose blood, great God?—*my father's!*"

"Too true, alas! my Carmen; but——"

"Yes, yes," interrupted the poor girl, vehemently, "a worthless woman caused all the mischief! She was beloved by both of them—both forgot that they had other and legitimate ties;—they fought, and your father killed mine. These, then, are the motives for the hatred that must separate us: my mother and her children ruined for a gambling debt; my mother deprived, in the flower of her youth, of a husband whom she adored in spite of his faults; her children made fatherless."

"I know it all—I knew it all long ago! And so thoroughly was I penetrated with the justice of the animosity that was entertained by your mother for my father's son, that when first those lovely eyes enthralled my heart, I despaired of ever obtaining the blessing of your hand. But at last your mother consented to listen to my suit; she looked with pity upon our mutual love; she nobly sacrificed her resentments to our

happiness; and now, in return, all that I possess will revert to her family. I cannot, alas! restore to her the husband she has lost, but I can give her a son who shall become the most devoted and submissive of her children."

"Oh, how miserably are you mistaken!" exclaimed Carmen. "Yes, brought up, as I was, to hate you—to execrate your very name—no sooner had love, despite those fierce prejudices, crept into my heart, than I foresaw, as you did, that our attachment must end unfortunately. What was my astonishment when I found that my mother encouraged it! I thought that your merits had caused her heart to soften at last towards you, and that she was glad to accept the reparation you offered her. And why not? It was not *you* who killed my father—it was not *you* who had impoverished us all. But oh! how great was our error when we believed that such hatred could ever be extinguished—such thirst for vengeance die away! Know then, Isidro, that my mother's hate is still so strong, that your death alone can satisfy it; that she contemplates in you only the offspring of a man whose memory she execrates. Know that, if my brother José has not already called you to account for the precious blood spilt by your father, it has not been from want of courage, but because my mother cast herself at his feet, and besought him to forbear. She knew your strength, and the skill with which you handle every weapon, and she trembled lest she should lose a son as she had lost a husband. No, she aspired to a vengeance more certain—a vengeance which you yourself placed within her reach, when you threw yourself into the arms that have only opened to smother you. To-morrow you are to marry me, and from that day forward your life will no longer be your own—it will belong to those who have sworn remorselessly to pour out, drop by drop, the poison that is to destroy it. At first they attempted to make me their accomplice, for they

thought that I, too, ought to avenge my father's death; but they soon found out that my love for you was stronger than my filial piety, and then they endeavoured to conceal their intentions from me, and make me believe that they had relinquished them. I watched them narrowly, however, and have discovered all. Their guilty joy was not to be repressed, and it has betrayed them. They believe that they have taken safe and sure means of carrying out their vengeance unsuspected; and after having taken patience for so many years, who will venture to accuse them of being accessory to the death of a son-in-law? Fly, then, Isidro! Cross not the threshold of a house where certain death awaits you—abandon all connection with a family of homicides! Fly! and to-morrow I will appear alone at the altar."

"Fly?" repeated her lover—"fly, and leave you to the mercy of those assassins?"

"They will know nothing of the part I have taken in your flight. They believe me to be at this moment soundly sleeping in my bed; and I have taken such precautions as will ensure my returning home without being seen or heard by any one in the house. They are, besides, far from suspecting that I have surprised their secret."

"Well, then, I *will* fly, but it shall be with you, my guardian angel! From this moment, I will lose sight of you no more."

"No," replied Carmen, in a resolute tone, "I cannot accompany you. I love my mother, guilty as she is, and I will not leave her. It is enough that I have betrayed her."

A long silence ensued, during which the doctor vainly endeavoured to distinguish some sound beyond the stifled sobs of Carmen. At last Isidro's voice was again heard.

"Be it so," he said; "I will fly from this place."

Carmen arose, and bending over her lover, pressed her lips

to his forehead. Then both of them left the room together, and in a few moments Isidro returned to it alone. His friend immediately joined him.

"My dear fellow," said the doctor, "I trust that you are determined to follow the advice of that noble girl, and that you will avoid entering into a family which she has so justly stigmatized as *homicide*."

"Oh, doctor!" exclaimed Isidro, quite unmindful of this remark, and entirely absorbed in his own tender recollections, "would that you could have seen her! How beautiful she looked! but at least you could hear the melting tones of her voice."

"I heard her give you the best advice that woman's heart ever dictated, or woman's lips ever pronounced, and had she croaked like a raven, I should have thought her voice delightful. But come, my dear Isidro, set about your preparatives for departure without loss of time; instead of my remaining your guest here, you shall become mine at Gibraltar: we will start from hence at day-break, and once that I have you within the English lines, it will go hard with me if I do not console you for the unfortunate termination of this cruel adventure."

Isidro made no reply, but, throwing off his clothes, flung himself upon his bed.

"Good night, doctor," said he, "happy slumbers to you!" and scarcely was his head upon the pillow ere he fell fast asleep.

Doctor W. remained silently watching him for some time, absorbed in the physiological phenomenon thus presented to his observation—a man in love, menaced with the loss of his mistress and his life, yet sleeping as calmly as an infant on its mother's breast. Then, as he himself was happily neither in love nor in danger of being poisoned, and as he was moreover exceedingly tired by his long ride to Ronda, he retired to his

own room to follow Isidro's example, muttering to himself as he undressed:—

"The devil's in it if I don't save the poor fellow in spite of himself!"

The next morning at an early hour Isidro entered the doctor's chamber, dressed in his wedding suit, and looking so handsome and so happy that his friend could not forbear complimenting him on his appearance. Isidro only smiled, but his smile was full of deep-seated joy.

"I see how it is," thought the worthy Englishman, "he is so madly in love that he is determined at all risks to marry the woman he adores—and he is in the right. For my own part, I see clearly what I have to do. As soon as the ceremony is over, I shall carry off the bride and bridegroom, either by fair means or foul, and make them pass the honeymoon with me at Gibraltar." And calling for his servant, he gave him private directions to have horses, and a mule with a woman's saddle, in readiness for a journey, as soon as the wedding ceremony was over. Then, rejoining his friend, they proceeded together to the church, where the bridal party was to meet them.

Already had many of the inhabitants of Ronda flocked thither, eager and curious to behold the accomplishment of a marriage which was to unite two families that had been divided by fifteen years of the bitterest hatred. The unfortunate events that had caused the feud were freely discussed by them, and the ruin of Diaz, his death, his widow's sufferings, and the triumph of Valdes, were on the lips of all—and, with one accord, all blamed Isidro for contracting such a union. "Why," they argued, "throw himself into his enemy's power—why rake up the bleeding ashes of the dead—why attempt to offer reparation for that which is irreparable?"

Their reasoning was founded upon the mistaken principle of the old *vendetta*, which has descended to the Spaniards from

the Arabs, and which may slumber for a time, but never dies. Some of the spectators fancied that even at the eleventh hour Isidro would repent of his imprudence, and that the beautiful Carmen would wait in vain for her lover at the altar. But his intimate friends indignantly refuted such a supposition. "No," they asserted, "he will come, and he will marry her, even though a wall of fire interposed between them!"

At that very moment Isidro appeared on the threshold of the church, his face radiant with serene joy, accompanied by Doctor W., whose grave and anxious countenance offered a striking contrast to the happiness that breathed in that of the bridegroom. Almost in the same instant the Diaz family entered by a lateral door, poor Carmen silently addressing prayers to Heaven that she might not find her beloved Isidro there—that he might be already far from Ronda and his implacable enemies; when lo! upon reaching the altar, she beheld him already standing there, his eyes fixed upon her trembling form with passionate admiration.

The ceremony commenced and terminated without interruption, and the whole wedding party proceeded from the church to the house of Isidro, where an elegant repast had been prepared. Carmen, pale as the white roses that were entwined among her raven tresses, and leaning for support upon her exulting bridegroom, looked more like a criminal led forth to execution than a happy bride who had just been united to the object of her tenderest affection. Doctor W. followed close in the rear, and, watching his opportunity as they reached Isidro's house, contrived in a whisper to convey to the bride the necessity of immediately acting upon the preparations he had made for their instant departure with him to Gibraltar.

Ere she could reply, Isidro interposed. "Doctor," said he, "go up to your room, and place yourself in the same spot you

occupied behind the curtain last night: you have been initiated into the commencement of this affair, you must witness the end of it."

The doctor in astonishment obeyed; but this time desiring to see as well as to hear all that passed, he took out his pen-knife and cut open a small portion of the curtain that hung before the Moorish arch. Scarcely had he done so ere he beheld Isidro enter the adjoining room, followed by the mother and brother of his bride. José Diaz, young, slight, with a heavy, unmeaning countenance, did not look like a very formidable adversary, but the Viuda Juana, with her imposing figure, her keen bright eyes, her hawk nose, and her thin lips —in all respects the very reverse of her son—was in truth the only enemy Isidro had to contend with. In the lines of her face the concealed witness fancied he could read cunning, dissimulation, and hatred that patiently waits for its victim, and in the sinister smile that curled her lip the ferocious joy of a vindictive woman who feels that she has at last clutched her prey. Isidro, as soon as he was alone with these two persons, closed the door carefully, and then, throwing himself into the arms of Juana Diaz, kissed her forehead, her cheeks, and her lips.

"Mother, dear mother!—suffer me to call you by that tender name—oh, how happy you have made me! for to you do I owe the only felicity I ever coveted, the possession of your beloved daughter, who is now—thanks be to heaven!—my wife. Oh, bless you a thousand times, mother, for having forgotten for a moment your hatred that you might bestow upon me so inestimable a gift. I shall enjoy my happiness but a short time, I know—but what matter? I am one of those who would barter a hundred years of mere existence for one rapturous week of love."

"What do you mean?" she inquired, endeavouring to disengage herself from his embrace.

"That you have injuries to avenge," replied Isidro—"that the blood of your husband rises up against me—that you intend to poison me!"

"Who told you—who *could* have told you so?" she continued, pushing him violently from her.

"Who told me?" he answered calmly; "no one—or, rather, every thing! Your lost fortune—your dead husband—your youth quenched in sorrow;—all require that I should perish by your hand. I know it, and I deliver myself up to you, so madly do I love your child! Another would have fled, but I remain; for death near her is preferable to exile far away. Let me die beneath the shade of my beautiful fig-trees, breathing the perfume of my orange flowers, my head pillowed upon Carmen's bosom, my hand clasped in hers! See, mother, here is a deed of conveyance by which I transfer all my possessions to my wife—you will enjoy them with her when I am gone. Here, too, is a poison, unerring in its effects, which destroys existence without acute suffering, and leaves no outward trace by which its agency may be discovered. Take it, and in eight days hence you may give it to me; but let *one week* of health and happiness with my beloved Carmen be my portion ere I die! Is that too much to ask of you? Afterwards you may crush your child's heart with the same misery that rendered your own youth so joyless;—young, lovely, and loving, you may deprive her of the husband she adores!"

The countenance of Juana Diaz had undergone many changes while Isidro thus addressed her, but at the last words a torrent of tears burst from her eyes. She rushed towards Isidro, snatched from his hand the phial of poison which he held out to her, and, dashing it upon the ground, crushed it beneath her feet; seized upon the deed of conveyance, and tore it into atoms; and then throwing her arms round Isidro's neck, she covered his face with kisses and tears.

"Let us forget the dead," she said; "you are my son—my noble, well-beloved son!"

"Ouf!" muttered the doctor to himself, drawing a long breath, and wiping his eyes—"he is saved!"

And now the chamber door was thrown open, and Carmen, pale and breathless, burst into the room in quest of her husband. Her mother ran forward to meet her; took both her hands in her own, and, placing her in Isidro's arms, exclaimed with that accent of sincerity and deep feeling which finds its way at once to the heart—

"He has carried the day! and now, my child, with my whole soul *I give him to you.*"

The wedding-day finished more gaily than it had commenced. The doctor, instead of carrying off the new married pair *vi et armis* to Gibraltar, danced a *bolero* that night with the Viuda Juana Diaz; and, in the following year, when at the period of the fair he revisited Ronda, he again led out the same lady—now become a grandmother—and together they opened the ball that was given by her to celebrate the christening of the infant son of Carmen and Isidro.

TO JENNY LIND.

BY MISS POWER.

[SEE FRONTISPIECE.]

GODDESS OF SONG! Enchantress! who that ere
With thirsting ear drank in the Heaven-born sounds
That flow like purling rills in summer-time,
Gladdening the soul of fainting voyager,
But felt his raptured spirit raised aloft
Above Earth's confines? How the petty cares,
The trivial thoughts, the calculations mean,
That will at certain seasons fill the minds
Of all mankind while struggling on through life,
Vanish, exorcised by the mighty power
Of thy all-conquering genius, gifted one!
All things art thou by turns: natures, opposed
As are Italia's sun with Zembla's snows,
Thou canst depict, each as it were thine own:
Wronged Norma's frenzy—fierce—wild—unrestrained;
Love—fury—jealous hate—thirst of revenge;
Maternal instinct now forgot—now roused,
And gushing with the same tempestuous force
That marked the madness of the moment past!
Amina,*—guileless—pure—earnest in love
And truth and conscious innocence, though marked
By foul suspicion for its helpless prey;
Fond—gentle—unresenting; never moved
To anger when most wronged, but bowing down
Beneath the still loved hand that deals the blow—

* La Sonnambula.

That hand from whence but lately she had sought,
With sweet confidingness, the strong support
Of lawful love 'gainst the unwished approach
Of flattery, unwelcome to her ear.
Maria,*—childish—wilful—frank; unskilled
In female arts or female lore, nor trained
By woman's teaching to command or check
Each impulse of a warm, untutored heart,—
Alice,†—upheld by Christian piety
Against the terrors that might well unseat
The courage of the bravest man that breathes!
Faithful Amalia,‡—beings of the minds
Of poets, are by thee embodied forth
With such reality—such force—such truth—
Such fine discernment—skill so exquisite—
That all who hear thee tremble—weep—rejoice—
Hope—triumph—fear—with the same sympathy
They would bestow on real joy or woe!
Hail to thee, Lind!—all hail! the nation's voice
Echoes thy praise; the humble cottage walls
Display thy semblance;§ children at their play
Lisp thy familiar name—a name beloved
As that of some near friend, by all the crowd
Of worshippers, who feel, in loving thee,
That thou art worthy. Virtue's self must smile
Approving on thy course—thy blameless life
Marked by kind deeds—by modesty and worth!

* La Figlia del Reggimento. † Roberto il Diavolo. ‡ I Masnadieri.

§ Shortly after her arrival in England, "the Swedish Nightingale" entering by chance a peasant's cottage, near Burnham Beeches, was at once amused and gratified at seeing a roughly-executed portrait of herself forming the highly-prized ornament of the lowly abode.

THE LITTLE HOP-PICKER'S DREAM.

BY MRS. S. C. HALL.

"And after all, mother," said Phœbe Young, "after all, mother, there is nothing so very hard in hop-picking—it is not like digging or ploughing. I have seen ladies make hay——"

"Spoil hay, my dear," interrupted her mother.

"Well, toss it about,—and hop-picking is not harder work than hay-making; and the weather is so fine, and there is so little money to be earned by sewing or knitting, that it was very kind of the master to have me, considering how many girls are out of bread, and all willing to work:—long ago, when we were better off," continued Phœbe, in answer to her mother's tears—"Long ago I have often stopt in the road to look at the hoppers, and longed to be with them, they seemed so happy, and now, dear mother, I have my wish."

Mrs. Young pressed her daughter to her heart.

A poor woman, circumstanced as Phœbe's mother had always been, must have encountered much of this world's sorrow, must have had much to bear from that hard task-master—Poverty. Her life was a repetition of the old story: early won—early wed—children born to die, weeping their little lives away in a few short months, wailing at the world, it might be, for a year or two;—of these, Phœbe was the youngest; the eldest-born, a son, was sailing about some foreign seas that his mother, perhaps, had never heard of. But it was not only the loss of her children and her time (the only inheritance of the

poor) in nursing hopeless children, that Mrs. Young had to contend with; her husband sickened—lingered—now better, now worse—a little uprising—and then, the never-to-be-overcome sorrow, his death—and again poverty; and then her own strength failed, and the armour she wore to defend her against all these trials was a Christian's faith in the future. She never sat down with sorrow and cherished it; but when fever so enfeebled her limbs that she could not walk, or move even to the green bench outside her door, she would sit at work on her straw mattress; no matter whether she was paid for what she did or not, she worked;—and those who passed heard her sweet full voice singing—not joyously, that it never did after her husband's death, but habitually—old trolls and snatches of songs, but most generally psalm tunes, such as she had learned from her grandfather, who had been parish clerk for fifty years. Every evening, in the summer at sunset, and in the winter at nightfall, if you passed the Widow Young's cottage, you were certain to hear the "old hundredth," and the very merriest and noisiest of the hamlet children would subside into silence when they heard the melody creeping over the village green, and steal to the window on tip-toe, though they had listened to it the night before; there was something so touching and so devotional in the sound of the poor woman's voice, that men, tardy at removing their hats at the church-door, would uncover whenever they heard Mrs. Young sing the old hundredth.

"Industry," she used to say, "made her cheerful; and patience, some time or other, brought prosperity." But, poor thing, though she had a deal of patience, the prosperity did not come.

Her eldest son, Harry, had been at sea for many years, so many, that Phœbe could not remember him; and his mother gave up all thoughts of ever seeing him again. When she

wept over his forgetfulness, she apologized to herself by saying, that she did so because he was her first-born; and when Phœbe's wants drew tears from her eyes, she in the same simple way observed, that she would not fret as she did about the girl, were it not that she was her youngest child! None of her humble neighbours smiled at these excuses, because they were natural—they were just like what they would have framed themselves.

For all her cheerful words, Phœbe's thoughts took a different range than they take in general with girls of her class. She would sit knitting midway between a little *burn*, or streamlet, and her mother's bee-hives, and the soothing murmur of the water, as it crept on through the sedges and pebbles, the hum of the bees; and the sweet solemn sound of her mother's voice, chaunting forth the "old hundredth," never failed to set her musing or dreaming, which amounted to the same thing as far as the knitting was concerned. She was conscious that this was evil, and she thought she would become more happy and more useful if an active employment broke up the habit altogether.

"You shall not have to reproach me with idleness in future, dear mother," she said, when resolved to 'go hopping;' "and I will be obliging to all; no complaints shall come from the hop-fields; and you are well enough now to do a great deal for yourself; you will not miss me at all, my mother, in these long days. I shall make a little money, and a very little does for us."

Phœbe went to the hop-garden with a determined resolution to work—not dream; but more than once, during the first week, her companions saw her loitering beside the well that supplied the hop-ground with water, and when recalled from her reverie, poor Phœbe found it no easy matter to get to active work immediately.

Those who have never seen the vineyards of France rave about their beauty, but a Kentish hop-ground is much more beautiful; the green and graceful tassels of the hop form more picturesque garlands, as they swing in the breeze, than the cropt vines are permitted to achieve; and the gatherers were joyous, when, not very long since, they had the assurance that a day's labour would produce something more than a day's bread.

The perpetual looking to the future, which is one of the great characteristics of an Englishman, is also one of the great sources of English wealth; and if last summer the song in the hay and the hop-field was less frequent and less joyous along our Kentish shores, it was simply because the peasants were forced to think of the pressure of the times, to anticipate that the small loaf would become still smaller, and that some who enjoyed the privilege of breathing the fresh air freely, would be doomed to the reproach of the workhouse before the next spring came. But Phœbe indulged, so to say, in no such speculations; she endeavoured to work, yet her thoughts were perpetually of her brother; this feverish anxiety to learn something of one she could not remember, marred poor Phœbe's exertions, and rendered her so dream-like and uncertain, that many of her companions did not consider her over wise. Sometimes these fits of musing would come on in the little garden; but whenever from any of the heights she caught a view of the sea, she remained as one spell-bound, fixed in a moment, her hand raised so as to overshadow her eyes, her lips apart, her energies bent on discovering a sail, and then wondering if any beneath its shadow knew aught of her brother. Had she been a boy, she would have gone to seek him, ploughing her way from ocean to ocean; and even as it was, so eager was the girl to find her brother, that nothing but her mother's helplessness prevented her changing



her dress and going fairly "aboard." Whenever she could borrow a book of travels, she would read and read, only wondering that people wrote so much more about the dull land than the bold adventurous ocean; and nothing could surpass the eagerness with which she conned over the maps, which modern improvement hangs in our rural schools.

Phœbe delighted her companions by her acquaintance with the seas; but she had no knowledge of the land. Soldiers would pass her unnoted, almost unobserved—but sailors could not do so. She would stand and stare after them, and sometimes, looking with her eloquent eyes into the face of some good-natured jack-tar, ask "if he knew her brother, Harry Young, who sailed away in a great ship years ago?"

The hop-picking season was drawing to a close, and except when Phœbe went to the well, all things proceeded in their usual way; but whenever she went there, the sight of the blue sea beyond set her musing, and all else was forgotten.

If she had heard of "castles in the air," she certainly did not understand what they meant, and yet she was an admirable architect of cloud-capt towers herself. She pictured her brother in a blue jacket and a round glazed hat, singing a song called "Poor Jack," and dancing perpetual hornpipes, such as she once saw danced at the theatre in Gravesend. Her visions were not ambitious. He would be able to take care of their mother, and they should never be obliged to leave their cottage—that was all. Nothing could be more pure and simple than Phœbe's love for her absent brother.

"Who knows," said one of her companions, "but your brother may come home, and make a lady of you."

"I don't know I should be any the happier," was her reply. "I have heard that fine ladies cried as salt tears as poor girls—mother says it's all balanced. No, if he would come home in that pretty glazed hat—if I could only hear

him say the sea-words the gentleman did in the play, and see him dance the hornpipe, I should be content."

She endeavoured to learn Dibdin's songs—those songs that kept alive the brave sea spirit of old England in its time of peril—until she perceived that the exertion of learning them affected her mother; indeed, the nearer the widow's pilgrimage approached its earthly termination, the more continually did she confine herself to her favourite psalms. Sometimes Phœbe's heart would overflow, and she would talk of her brother—of how trim and handsome he undoubtedly was; how much he would be admired; how every one would inquire who he could be; how well his little round glazed hat would look upon the nail beside the old clock; and, above all, how astonishingly he would dance the sailor's hornpipe. This poor Phœbe had deemed a certainty; a sailor who could not dance a hornpipe was no sailor at all in her opinion—the sailor's hornpipe was one of the glories of the English navy.

The length of time elapsing between the formation of these dreams and their realization did not discourage her in the least; on the contrary, whether knitting or sewing, or hopping or hay-making, it was all the same. Even during the long nights of the past winter, when a hasty step paused at her door, she held her breath, thinking it must be her brother. When it continued its way, she only murmured, "Well, perhaps to-morrow night." Tidings of wreck and destruction of ships, far far from their homes, often caused Phœbe's eyes to overflow; but in an hour she was afloat again—her hope as bright as if it had never been dimmed by a single tear.

When her day's work in the hop-field was finished, she would go half a mile round to catch a glimpse of the sea, and perhaps the close of evening would find her transfixed to the spot. She loitered and wasted her time certainly, but not in sports or evil company.

The hop harvest was finished, the breeze no longer flaunted amid the tall alleys and tangled foliage of the bine—the crisp leaves of the beech, and the cones of the fir, the acorns, and the curled leaves of the oak, were so thickly bedded over the wood paths that you could hear the footfalls of the lightest hare—the total effect of the landscape was changed—the sea no longer showed like a blue band, girding the green and swelling landscape, but had become heavy and lead coloured, and the fields were hard and brown. Shrill winds whistled through the village, and rattled against the windows. Age and childhood cowered over the fire, while youth and manhood met the weather with a defiance nerved for the effort. The voice of the widow was not heard distinctly, as in summer, for the lattice was closed; and truth to tell, it was more feeble than it had been. There was no fire on her hearth, and Phœbe sat beside her bed, not musing, but working, her needle quickened by necessity. There was a pause in her mother's voice.

"Thread this needle for me, Phœbe—my sight grows very dim; you do twice as much as I do in the day now."

"So I ought, mother."

"I wonder, dear, shall I see another summer. If I do not, and if your brother should return, you will give him my blessing. Tell him I kept out of the workhouse; and surely, Phœbe, I might have given way and gone in, but for the feeling about you both, not to have it said, dear, that your mother died there. It was intended to make that house the refuge, not the terror of the poor!—Ah, dear!"

Phœbe turned away to hide her tears.

"Are you cold, dear?" persisted Mrs. Young, during another pause in the psalm, "are you cold? Let me look what you've done. Why, child, you have wetted the cambric. Oh, dear! how can the needle get through wet cloth? Why

do you cry?—when this is finished we shall have fire, for the lady pays the minute the work goes home:" and again she trolled the psalm.

There was want enough within that little room, and much endurance had damped the cheerful spirit of both mother and child; but though damped, it was not extinguished, and the widow's was sustained by the hope not of this world. Her pure transparent complexion, the lustre of her deep eyes, the purple hue of her lips, combined with her attenuated form, were all eloquent of the passing away of the present; this it was that caused poor Phœbe's eyes to overflow: her mother had been "bad" so long that she never thought she could get worse—never, until that day, had she thought that the time was at hand when she should be left quite alone.

Again her mother paused.

"Phœbe," she said, at last, "I have just thought, if Harry should come home when I am gone, how would you know him."

"He is my brother."

"True, child; but you are changed, and so is he."

"He is a sailor."

"Yes, but there are many sailors beside Harry."

"Blue jacket and trousers, and round black hat," she replied, smiling through her tears.

"There are hundreds such."

"I have heard you describe him. Blue eyes, fair hair, long and curly—beautiful hair, mother."

"My boy—he had!" said the widow, clasping her hands, and looking into the vacancy in which she placed his form. "He had the loveliest fair hair, the sweetest voice and smile that ever were heard or seen—and such a scholar!"

"And danced, mother?"

"Nay, I never saw him dance," she answered; "but he was a lovely rosy child—the only healthy one I ever had."

"I would know my brother among a thousand, said Phœbe; "something *here* would tell me. Not know my brother—indeed, indeed, I should, anywhere."

"There have been times when mothers have not known their own children," was the reply; "time makes such changes. I am not what I was, nor you, my child, what you were. You are sunburnt, freckled; and sometimes, Phœbe, God forgive me! I think you have a hungry look. I have fancied you give me more than I ought to have of food—tell me, child, is it so?"

There was a terrible earnestness in the poor woman's manner as she said this. Phœbe turned off the question; wondered at her mother's fancying such a thing; and plied her needle so quickly, that, her task finished, she set out through the sleet and wind to take it to its destination. The lady was not at home—her hope of fire and light destroyed. It was not new to her to be so circumstanced, for the long nights of winter are great trials to the poor. But she felt it bitterly, her mother was so unwell; and if she got worse, she should not have light to see how she looked. This afflicted Phœbe sadly. She walked on slowly, breasting the wind; and the sleet was so sharp, that she fancied it cut her face. She passed through the village; the windows were closed—she almost thought on purpose. She then hastened forward; but not so fast as to prevent a man, stumping along on a wooden leg, from overtaking her. He said it was a cold night, and she shivered out some reply. She thought he spoke in a gruff voice, but it might be only imagination. He asked her various questions; and when she said she was Mrs. Young's daughter, he seized her by the arm suddenly, and dragged her to where the last oil lamp of the village shimmered an in-and-out sort of light. He held her there for an instant; she saw his red face, and his stubbly hair sticking out from

beneath a travelling cap, his gold chain, and the ring on his finger. She thought him a hideous man; and when he released her, she darted forward with the swiftness of a roe. Before she could fasten the door of their cottage, the man had forced himself into the room. Some kind neighbour had brought and lit a candle during her absence; it was burning on the table, and Phœbe saw that her mother slept. She turned to the stranger, and pointed with her finger to the poor bed; his features were convulsed by some strong emotion, tears overflowed his face. He approached the bed, the girl trembled violently. "Sir, dear good sir, do not harm her!" she exclaimed.

"Harm *her!*" he repeated, in a voice hoarse and suffocated, "harm MY MOTHER!"

A wooden leg, a red face, grizzled hair, and a loose travelling cap!—could *that* be her brother?—was such the realization of her dream? But the reality was better than the ideal; and so she thought before the next day was done—though she could not help smiling to herself at the idea of the *real*, not the *imaginary* Harry, dancing a hornpipe.

The last days of the widow, though not many in number, were rich in happiness; and her parting hours were so tranquil that her breath passed away with a note of the "Old Hundredth"—mingling with a prayer of gratitude that Phœbe had found not only a rich, but a kind protector, in her long-lost brother.

LINES

ADDRESSED TO A LADY, WITH MADAME DE SEVIGNE'S LETTERS, PREVIOUS TO HER EMBARKATION FOR THE CONTINENT.

BY J. W. DENISON, ESQ., M.P.

These letters show, my young and charming maid,
The ardent love a mother once display'd;
In them you trace with manly sense combined,
The winning softness of the female mind.
In them observe with warmest friendship fraught,
All proud Versailles' high-polish'd circle taught;
When Pleasure, dazzling as an eastern queen,
Could add refinement to the splendid scene;
When rival Art with Nature almost vied,
And courtly manners soften'd feudal pride.
Ere then at Spa you seek the flow'ry dell,
Or health imbibe at Baden's far-famed well,
Reflect—each season will purloin a grace,
Or leave a wrinkle in that blooming face;
With faded lustre, in each transient year,
The toilette—theatre—and ball appear;
Nor yet to Fashion's gay pursuit confined,
With hasty step, decay unnerves the mind.
No more to books, from ev'ry care we fly,
Books can no more the aching void supply;
Each year the soldier, with a fainter glow,
Forms the dread line, and bids the trumpet blow;

Each year deprives the poet of his fire,
Weakens his genius, and unstrings his lyre;
Restrains the lover in his tow'ring flight,
Damps all his ardour with the chill of night;
And as gay dreams of future life we view,
How soon, reflect! may be the last adieu!—
But why, midst pleasure, such remarks intrude?
Haste—let them vanish, with their "*sombre*" brood;
Dispel each feeling of regret or care,
And shine the foremost of the young and fair;
Each varied charm of foreign climes explore,
The stately palace, or romantic shore;
From Seine's green border, to Schaffhausen's fall;
Helvetia's forests, or the Louvre's vast hall;—
Yet when in solitude you fondly roam,
How oft will rise the magic thought of home!
Though ivied ruins crown the fertile plain,
Or some old convent wakes reflection's train;
Through the proud Vatican's imposing scene,
Or lovely Naples, of each joy the queen;
Though gay St. Carlos may the bosom fire,
Or, lost in thought, Vesuvius you admire;
That talisman in ev'ry spot we trace,
And—"*Home, sweet home*," no distance can efface!

BATAILLON.

PAR M. EUGENE SUE.

Le Capitaine David était un vieux soldat de l'Empire, criblé de blessures et vivant tant bien que mal de sa modique retraite. Il occupait le rez-de-chaussée d'une maison de la barrière de Charenton, et avait pour ménagère une vieille femme nommée Madame Tolibois.

Le Capitaine David s'était trouvé à vingt batailles ; sa froide bravoure était renommée parmi ses vieux frères d'armes, attestée par les plus brillants états de services ; mais le vétéran tremblait comme un enfant devant la despotique et acariâtre *Madame Tolibois*, qui, du reste, l'aimait à sa manière.

Elle aurait passé vingt nuits à veiller le capitaine ; elle ne lui faisait pas tort d'un liard, quoiqu'elle fut *surintendante de ses finances ;* elle était incapable de lever la dîme du *premier bouillon* sur le modeste pot-au-feu du capitaine, et encore moins capable de boire quelques gorgées de la demi-bouteille de vin qu'elle lui servait chaque jour à son dîner, et de combler ce *déficit liquide* au moyen d'eau de puits.

Mais, hélas ! ces rares et solides qualités, la ménagère les faisait payer cher au vétéran, en se montrant d'un caractère détestable, d'un despotisme effrayant et d'une jalousie féroce à l'endroit des affections ou des distractions que le vieux soldat tentait parfois de se permettre.

De cette féroce jalousie de Madame Tolibois, voici un lamentable et terrible exemple.

Un jour, faisant sa promenade accoutumée dans la Plaine de Charenton, le capitaine avait été obstinément suivi par un griffon au poil fauve, hérissé, crotté, à la mine suppliante, aux yeux intelligent et qui était privé d'une de ses pattes de devant.

Ce pauvre *invalide* de la race canine intéressa le vétéran, qui se fit une petite joie d'avoir désormais un compagnon lors de ses excursions quotidiennes, aussi en mémoire de son ancien métier, baptisa-t-il sur-le-champ le griffon du nom de *Bataillon.*

Il serait difficile de peindre l'angoisse du digne homme lorsqu'il rentra chez lui en se demandant quel accueil Madame Tolibois ferait à ce nouveau commensal, doublement intéressant en sa qualité de chien perdu et *d'amputé,* pensait le vétéran.

La *question financière* ne pouvait être sérieusement posée par la ménagère, le griffon était de petite espèce, et quoique la plus rigoureuse économie fut imposée au capitaine par la modicité de sa solde de retraite, cette nouvelle *bouche* ne pouvait raisonnablement compter comme surcroît de dépense; mais pour que l'admission de *Bataillon* fût acceptée à *l'unanimité,* il restait à résoudre la question de convenance, d'opportunité et peut-être même de rivalité, car l'ombrageuse Madame Tolibois pouvait craindre que ce nouveau commensal ne prit une large part dans l'affection de son maître.

Enfin le vieux soldat, de retour de sa promenade, arrivant devant sa porte, sonna, ma foi, très-résolument, après s'être donné du courage en regardant une dernière fois *Bataillon,* qui, frétillant la queue et immobile sur ses trois pattes, attachait sur son nouveau maître ses yeux doux et craintifs avec une anxiété singulière.

— Pauvre bête! — pensa naïvement le Capitaine David, il est aussi inquiet que moi de l'accueil qu'on va *nous* faire.

La porte s'ouvrit.

Aux premiers mots assez embarrassés que balbutia le vétéran sur sa rencontre avec la pauvre bête éclopée et sur le désir qu'il manifesta timidement de donner asile à l'invalide, Madame Tolibois répondit froidement :

— Vous êtes le maître; vous pouvez héberger chez vous le premier venu; si bon vous semble ... ramenez ici tous les

vagabonds, tous les bandits que vous rencontrerez . . . puis, que ça vous amuse.

Le calme apparent de la ménagère étonna et alarma d'autant plus le capitaine qu'il surprit plusieurs fois pendant la soirée le regard sournois de Madame Tolibois obliquement attaché sur *Bataillon*, tandis que celui-ci tâchait cependant de se faire le plus humble, le moins gênant possible.

La nuit venue, le vétéran désira que le griffon couchât par terre dans un coin de sa chambre.

— Ah ! ... il paraît que c'est une vraie tendresse ? ... ça tourne à la passion, — s'était écriée Madame Tolibois avec un éclat de rire si cruellement sardonique que le vieux soldat craignant d'exaspérer la terrible femme, se hâta de dire :

— Qu'après tout le chien ne devait pas avoir l'habitude d'être très-choyé, et qu'il coucherait dans le jardin.

Cette concession parut calmer un peu la dangereuse ennemie du griffon.

— Va coucher, Bataillon, va t'en ! — dit le capitaine de sa plus grosse voix.

Le chien s'empressa d'obéir, et sortit de la chambre, la queue basse, non sans avoir regardé bien tristement son nouveau maître.

Madame Tolibois ouvrit une porte qui donnait sur le petit jardin attenant au rez-de-chaussée occupé par son maître, et d'un grand coup de pied envoya le griffon au milieu d'une plate-bande.

A ce procédé inhospitalier, *Bataillon* ne poussa pas une plainte, pas un cri, et guidé par son instinct, il alla, tout en clopinant, se coucher par terre au bas de la fenêtre de la chambre du vétéran.

Huit jours se passèrent.

Chaque jour avait augmenté l'attachement du capitaine pour *Bataillon*, véritablement doué des plus intelligentes qualités.

En promenade, *Bataillon* allait et venait, mais quittant à

peine son maître de quelques pas; malgré sa petite taille le griffon se montrait d'une folle témérité dès qu'un chien étranger, fut-il trois fois gros comme lui, semblait regarder son maître; d'un bond *Bataillon* s'élançait sur l'impertinent et le forçait presque toujours à la retraite.

Cette bravoure persuada le vétéran que *Bataillon* avait perdu sa quatrième patte à la bataille, et il ne lui devint que plus cher.

Au logis, le griffon redoublait de gentillesse.

Le capitaine laissait-il tomber son mouchoir, *Bataillon* le ramassait et le rapportait. Une autre fois, de lui même et sans invitation, le griffon s'asseyait sur ses pattes de derrière et faisait le beau devant son maître, celui-ci lui mettant alors entre les dents un des bords de sa *blague* à tabac, bien ouverte, y puisait à loisir de quoi bourrer sa pipe, pendant que *Bataillon* restait immobile, serrant le sac de toute la force de ses machoires; en bien d'autres circonstances, enfin, *Bataillon* savait se rendre si utile ou si agréable que le vétéran répétait vingt fois par jour dans son enthousiasme:

— Il ne lui manque que la parole, à ce diable de petit *Bataillon*, c'est pour moi un vrai camarade . . .

Mais, hélas! ces paroles trop flatteuses pour le griffon, furent fatalement recueillies par Madame Tolibois.

D'ailleurs, de jour en jour la ménagère était devenue plus sombre, plus taciturne, plus préoccupée; malheureusement le capitaine, aussi peu soupçonneux que clairvoyant, et tout à l'innocente joie que lui causait la possession de *Bataillon*, ne remarqua pas l'air soucieux, presque farouche, de la terrible femme.

Une fois même, rentrant plus tôt que d'habitude, le capitaine avait surpris sa ménagère sur le seuil de la porte en conférence mystérieuse avec un homme à longue barbe et à figure sinistre, qui disparut rapidement à la vue du vétéran . . . celui-ci, confiant, aveugle comme un homme heureux, n'attacha aucune importance à cet incident.

Un soir, le capitaine s'était couché comme d'habitude.

Aucun funeste pressentiment, ancun songe horrible ne troubla le sommeil du vieux soldat . . . au contraire, le malheureux rêva que *Bataillon* battait aux dominos le fameux *Munito* et que sur une perfide insinuation du *caniche* sur la loyauté du jeu du griffon, celui-ci demandant le champ clos, houspillait d'une atroce façon le grand joueur de dominos.

Le jour vint . . . le capitaine ravi de son rêve, se leva pour aller en faire part à *Bataillon*, et se rendit dans le jardin, où il avait industrieusement construit une petite niche pour le griffon.

La niche était vide.

Le vétéran appela *Bataillon* . . .

Bataillon ne répondit pas.

Le jardin fut fouillé, exploré dans tous les coins . . . pas de *Bataillon*.

Le Capitaine David rentra très-inquiet dans l'appartement et appela Madame Tolibois.

Celle-ci tarda quelque temps à paraître.

Et lorsqu'elle parut, elle était très-pâle.

— Où donc est *Bataillon ?* Voilà un quart d'heure que je le cherche et que je l'appelle, — dit le vieux soldat avec anxiété.

A ces interrogations Madame Tolibois répondit comme Caïn.

— Vous ne me l'avez pas donné en garde, votre Bataillon.

Et la ménagère devenait de plus en plus pâle, et elle n'osait regarder son maître en face, et sa voix tremblait.

Très peu observateur, très peu défiant, le capitaine ne s'aperçut pas du trouble de Madame Tolibois, et après avoir cherché aussi vainement *Bataillon* dans la maison que dans le jardin, il sortit, pensant que le griffon pouvait avoir pendant un instant quitté le logis pour la rue, inconduite que la pauvre bête n'avait pourtant jamais eu à se reprocher.

Le capitaine venait de faire quelques pas, lorsqu'à une portée de fusil environ, il crut voir un objet informe au pied du mur de son jardin.

Il y courut . . .

Quel spectacle !

Au milieu d'une mare de sang fumant encore, gisait le cadavre d'un chien, completêment dépouillé de sa peau.

Un horrible soupçon traversa l'esprit du vieux soldat. Il se baissa . . . examina les pattes du cadavre . . . hélas ! la *patte droite* du devant manquait . . .

Plus de doute . . . c'était *Bataillon !*

En relevant la tête avec une stupeur douloureuse, le capitaine aperçut au loin, à l'autre extrémité de la rue déserte, un chiffonnier marchant très-vîte, et qui, par deux fois, retourna la tête pour regarder derrière lui avec inquiétude.

C'était l'homme à la longue barbe . . . à la physionomie sinistre, avec lequel Madame Tolibois s'était mystérieusement entretenue.

Malgré son âge et ses blessures, le vétéran était encore agile et vigoureux, la colère doublant ses forces, il se mit à la poursuite du chiffonnier, l'atteignit, et vit la peau de *Bataillon* . . . sanglant trophée ! . . . étalée sur la hotte de l'homme à la barbe !

Saisir le chiffonnier au collet, lui arracher son crochet et le lui casser sur la tête, ce fut pour le capitaine l'affaire d'un moment, malgré la résistance de son adversaire, abasourdi par cette brusque attaque.

— Ah ! tu as volé, tué et dépouillé mon pauvre brave chien ! disait le vétéran en redoublant ses gourmades.

— Mais écoutez-moi donc, bourgeois, — disait l'autre, en parant les coups de son mieux, je n'ai pas volé le chien, on me l'a donné . . . c'est une vieille femme . . . de la maison *numéro sept* . . . je lui ferai dire devant vous ! si vous ne me croyez pas, bourgeois.

— Elle t'a donné . . . ce chien ? — s'écria le capitaine foudroyé par cette révélation, elle te l'a donné pour le tuer ?

— Pour le tuer . . . non . . . bourgeois ; mais pour le perdre, — reprit le chiffonnier ; alors, comme une peau de chien vaut

toujours bien une pièce de dix sous, et qu'on voulait s'en défaire de cette bête . . . moi . . . je l'ai *déshabillée* . . . voilà tout mon crime !

La colère du vétéran changea d'objet ; il laissa le chiffonnier grommeler en se frottant les côtes, et revint rapidement chez lui en détournant sa rue et essuyant une larme furtive lorsqu'il passa devant les restes sanglants du pauvre *Bataillon.*

De retour dans sa maison, le capitaine fit venir Madame Tolibois, et lui dit d'une voix terrible.

— Vous êtes une méchante créature, sortez de chez moi ! . . .

Jamais le capitaine ne s'était montré à sa ménagère que sous un aspect placide et débonnaire, aussi recula-t-elle épouvantée, en voyant pour la première fois son maître, l'œil étincelant de colère, la figure enflammée et sa moustache blanche horripilée par la fureur.

— Mon Dieu, monsieur, vous me faites peur, — s'écria-t-elle . . . qu'y a-t-il ?

— Il y a que vous avez livré ce pauvre chien à un chiffonnier, qui l'a tué pour avoir sa peau ! mauvaise femme que vous êtes !

— Il l'a tué ! . . . ah ! quel gredin ! Je vous jure, monsieur, par le salut de notre *Saint Père,* que je ne lui avais donné le maudit griffon que pour le perdre . . .

— Et pourquoi ? quel mal vous faisait ce chien ?

— Quel mal ! — s'ecria Madame Tolibois, en fondant en larmes et donnant enfin cours à ses ressentiments si longtemps contenus — Quel mal ce maudit chien m'a fait ! Eh bien ! je vas vous le dire . . . oui, vous ne pensiez qu'à lui . . . vous n'aviez d'yeux et d'oreilles que pour lui . . . depuis qu'il était ici vous me regardiez moins que lui . . . moins qu'un chien . . . vous l'appeliez votre *camarade,* tandis que moi, je n'étais que votre servante . . . Oui, moi, qui vous sers depuis dix ans, vous me préfériez au nouveau venu . . . un vagabond intrigant et flatteur que vous ne connaissiez que depuis huit jours !

— Allons donc! vous êtes folle!

— Non, monsieur, je ne suis pas folle; mais j'aurais pu le devenir à force de chagrin ... Depuis que le chien était ici je ne dormais plus ... je ne mangeais plus ... je ne vivais plus ... vingt fois j'ai été sur le point de lui donner une *boulette*, à ce maudit animal! mais je n'ai pas osé, car je n'ai pas si mauvais cœur que vous croyez! Et puis, enfin, c'était une *créature* après tout ... ce chien! ... à la fin je n'y ai plus tenu ... il fallait que lui ou moi sortions d'ici, j'ai mieux aimé que ça soit lui ... et je me suis entendue avec le chiffonnier pour qu'il aille perdre le chien à l'autre bout de Paris ... Mais pour lui avoir dit de le tuer ... jamais!

Si étrange, si *bête* peut-être que doive paraître la jalousie de Madame Tolibois, cette jalousie d'affection était si naïve, si sincère, elle s'appuyait d'ailleurs sur un dévouement si réel, quoique souvent insupportable dans sa forme, que le vieux soldat finit par s'apaiser.

La ménagère voulut aller elle-même chercher les restes de *Bataillon*, qui furent solennellement inhumés dans un coin du jardin, sous la petite niche que le vétéran avait construite pour son compagnon.

Depuis lors, et malgré ses regrets, le Capitaine David eut la générosité de ne jamais faire la moindre allusion au sort funeste du pauvre Bataillon, et peu à peu Madame Tolibois reprit ses habitudes despotiques, ombrageuses et jalouses.

. . . . . .

Donnez une larme à Bataillon.

Aux Bordes, 29 *Juillet*, 1847.

SLAVERY.

BY THE LADY EMMELINE STUART WORTLEY.

Earth! Earth! and canst thou longer bear
The groan of slavery's long despair,
The shadows of its gloom?
Canst thou endure th' abhorrent wrong,
If thou art armed and brave and strong,
To stamp the horror's doom?

Know, while in yoke of suffering bound,
One crushed and tortured wretch is found,
On *thy* brow is the brand!
Accursed shall states and races be
That boast *their own* high liberty,
And bind their brother's hand!

While groaning o'er his world-wide grave
Remains one scourged and outraged slave,
Ne'er boast your Force or Fame!
His wrongs are venom in your veins,
His degradations are your stains,
His martyrdom—*your* shame!

His every anguish is *your* crime!—
Beware! or *this* shall through all time
Attest your base unworth!—
His scars are your enormous guilt,
Your Sin, each heart-drop he hath spilt,
Dishonour to you, Earth!

A generation all of Cains,
Red—red—with deadliest murder-stains,
This generation seems,—
If they, while knowing th' awful truth,
Steeled 'gainst remorse, and deaf to ruth,
Stanch not the out-welling streams.

Perish the Monster-Plague that grinds
All nations through their thoughts and minds,
While they That Wrong allow!
While *they* consent—and coward-like bend,
Their sanction to such deeds to lend—
That sanction dare avow!

One land enslaved should frown like Night—
One fettered people cast a blight
O'er twice ten thousand free!
Vainly ye boast—while these things last—
Your pride of Present and of Past—
Freedom from Sea to Sea!

Freedom!—not while a single slave,
Doomed in unsuccoured pangs to rave
Contaminates our sphere!—
Lo! million millions free, should be
Barred from *Heaven-bless'd* true liberty,
While *one* mourns, shackled here!

Freedom!—Forswear the sacred sound—
It is *not* freedom if you're bound
To such degrading needs!—
If you're thus forced to sit and mark
The triumph of this outrage dark,
While Heaven's scarred image bleeds!

Heaven's desecrated temple!—that,
Which for Itself It deigned create,
Embruted, blurred, and bann'd!
Poor Slaves!—*they* even might pity those
Who *dare* not grandly interpose,
With Power's avenging hand!

Freedom!—are they not slaves of soul,
Who lack the courage to control
That evil they condemn?
Whose wants, whose fears, must make them still
Aid the abhorred, infernal ill
That yet bounds back on *them!*

Freedom!—I tell ye no! 'tis vain,
While round your soul of souls that chain
Is wreathed!—the deadliest—worst—
Which binds ye to such grovelling mood,
Your loftiest duties all withstood,—
Earth! 'tis a thing accursed!

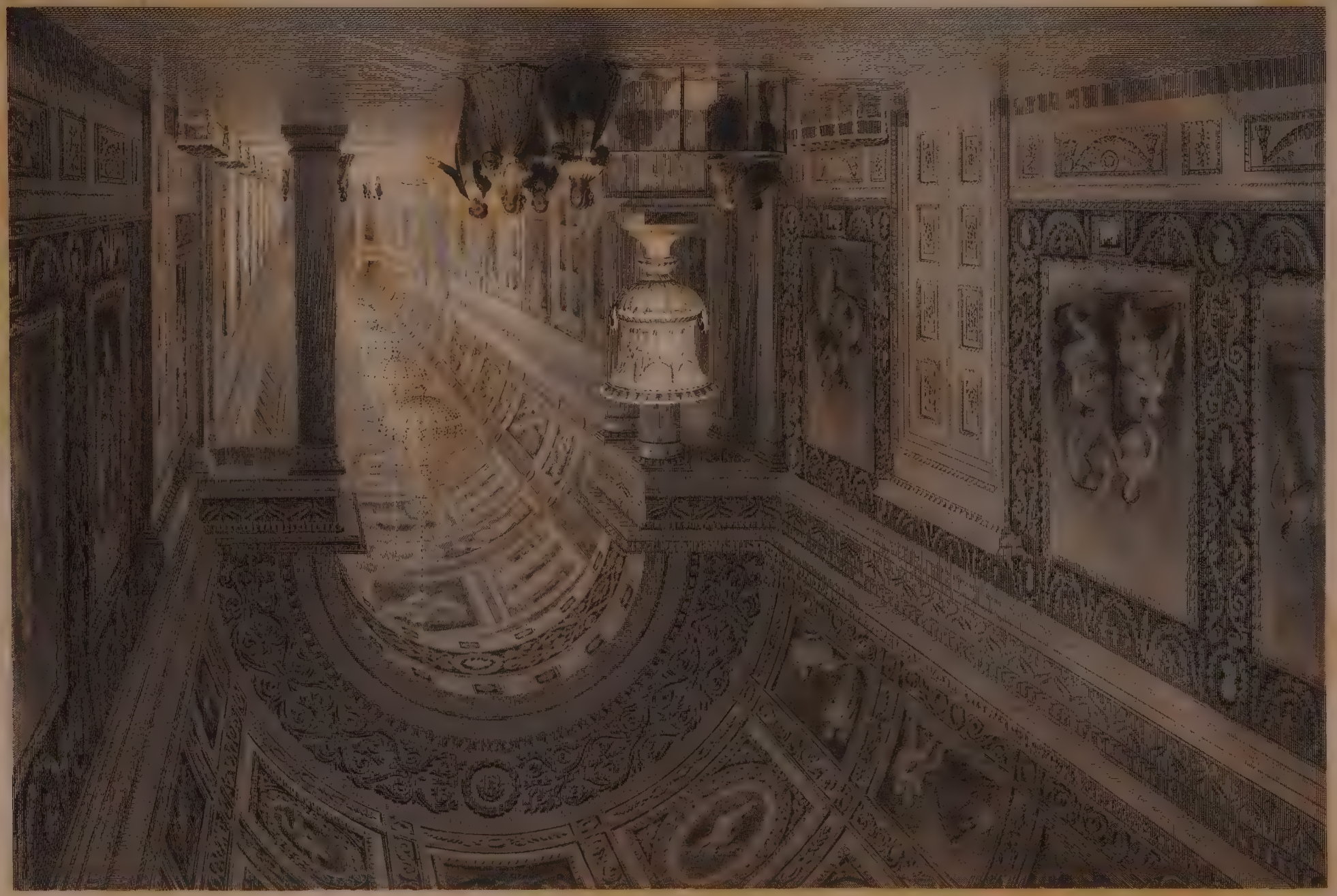
Then let mankind in might arise
(Blessed by yon just approving skies)
To do the Deed of Worth!
Be freedom to the Bound One given!
Then frown no more, thou outraged Heaven,
Thou desecrated Earth!

Foul Upas-tree of Slavery's curse,
Dark Upas of the Universe!—
Down with it!—Root and branch!—
Unite!—ye nations!—each and all!
(Haste!—bid the o'ershadowing Gloom to fall!)
Magnanimously staunch!

Hushed be those groans that seemed to scare
Peace from the universal air—
Hushed, or to hymn-notes changed.
'Twill be a Golden Age for *thee*,—
World!—if red War and Slavery,
Both be from Thee estranged.

Chief, Thou!—my Country!—heed and hear!—
Lest Vengeance threatening darkly near
Should whelm thee in its flood,—
Should bid thy Sun go down in ire,—
Should turn thy Seas to Seas of Fire,—
Thy Heavens—to Heavens of Blood!

London, Published for the Proprietor, by Hurst Boggs, Fleet Street, December 1, 1842



THE GALLERY OF DIANA AT FONTAINEBLEAU.

BY THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

A WARRIOR king decreed this hall should rise
To tell posterity his deeds in war
Upon its pictured walls, and not alone
His prowess but his love commemorate:
For 'neath the veil of allegory shone
His passion for his peerless Gabrielle.*
And those who glanced at battles bravely fought
By him who shunn'd no danger where bright fame
Might be the guerdon, learn'd to pardon soon
The single weakness in a knight so bold.
What memories awake when we behold
This gallery! Here Monaldeschi's blood
Crimson'd the floor by her† command, whose heart
Belied her sex, when, deaf to pity's voice,
She heeded not his cries for mercy urg'd
When, madden'd by the fear of coming death,
He knelt, he pray'd, and wept in abject fear,
And met but stern reproach and stinging scorn.
O! shame that she who could resign a throne
Could not subdue her own tyrannic will!

* * * * * *

And here he‡ came, when, wild ambition foil'd,

* The gallery of Diana was constructed by order of Henry the Fourth, and was decorated by pictures representing the battles he had gained as well as by allegorical subjects bearing allusion to his passion for the fair Gabrielle, painted by Ambroise Dubois.

† The Queen Christina of Sweden.

‡ The Emperor Napoleon.

Vict'ry no longer hover'd o'er his crest,
And nations arm'd against him vengeance swore
For past humiliation, when they paid
Servile obedience to their conqueror's law
Ere fortune frown'd upon her fav'rite son.
What bitter pangs were his as now reveal'd
Ingratitude stood forth all unabash'd
And friends were few. His guards, whom long he led
To glory, conquer'd now by grief, shed tears
As they received his earnest fond farewell,
Whom as a god they worshipp'd in their hearts!

* * * * * *

'Tis past—the vision fades like some sad dream,
And new-born splendour decks once more the scene.

A FEW EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

BY R. BERNAL, ESQ., M. P.

The utilitarian progress of the age is rapidly overthrowing the dreams and associations of the romantic school. Gas—steam paddles—and railways, while they have increased and secured the conveniences and enjoyments of life, have dissipated the dark mysteries and fictions of bygone days. The feudal tower—the forest of doubtful reputation—the haunted mansion, are gradually disappearing, and submitting to the all-powerful mandates of railroad surveyors and contractors. Quaint traditions, and family tales, are forgotten, or ridiculed; and the excavation of a tunnel, or the construction of an embankment, when bringing to light, some injured and perishable relics of uncertain date, supplies merely amusing problems for the speculation, and occupation of antiquarian societies.

Gentle and patient readers! do bear with me, when I confess, I am weak enough to encourage a lingering attachment to old associations, and a taste for the gossipings handed down to us, from those, who have been long since removed from the stage of life. Stimulated by this feeling, I venture to ask of you, not to discredit everything that may be related to you, or to regard as pure fiction, the incidents of every tale, that may be disclosed to you.

Not many years ago, there was standing in a metropolitan county, a large, rambling, manor-house, of the time and architecture, styled Elizabethan. The site, on which, it was

placed, was by no means, remarkable for beauty, or picturesque attractions. A flat, and damp country extending for miles, in the rear of this edifice, was partially covered with thick woods of ancient growth. In front, a level tract of grass-land, intersected by deep drains, or ditches, led over a short distance, to the low and desolate sea-shore. In the spring, and fall of the year, the bitter east wind, only slightly interrupted by the withered foliage, whistled mournfully over the surrounding demense; and the cheerless appearance of the locality then became singularly depressing. The house itself, with its offices, forming a spacious centre, with wings, and built of a cold-looking grey stone, was in harmony with the accompanying scenery. The interior was of some pretensions, containing numerous apartments, staircases, and passages; and with the advantages of care and attention, would have been fully equal to the purposes of an owner of rank and wealth. Uninviting as the surrounding landscape was, this house had been the mansion of a very considerable estate, and the farms belonging thereto, however ugly to common eyes, were profitable both to the landlord and tenants.

Such was Wingrave Manor, when, in very early years, I recollect it. Now, but little of the original building remains: the features of the surrounding scenery, are indeed unaltered, except so far, as the modern improvements in agriculture, and the preparations for a projected railway, may have interfered with them. It was in the days of boyhood, when I first accompanied a male relation on a visit to this mansion. He had been intimately acquainted, from his outset in life, with the then inhabitant of Wingrave Manor. For reasons of delicacy, I must be permitted to substitute a fictitious name for the real one of the proprietor of that dwelling—I will therefore designate him, by the appellation of Mortimer. Any little

knowledge which I acquired of the circumstances, or family history of that gentleman, was, in the first instance, derived from my relative. I had heard from that source, (though with the usual inattention of youth,) what the information obtained in subsequent years, had confirmed—that Mr. Mortimer had been embarrassed in his circumstances, before he came into possession of the estate. That gentleman lived in privacy, and retirement, seldom quitting his residence, and confining himself to the occasional society of two or three particular friends. This family were of ancient descent, having been for centuries, settled at Wingrave. They professed the Roman Catholic religion, to which, their descendant, was also firmly attached. Mr. Gerald Mortimer was a widower, having an only child, a son, who, at the period of my visit to Wingrave, was pursuing his studies at a foreign university.

A strange tradition had been, from remote date, current in the family of Mortimer—that no heir of the race, should enjoy, or continue in the possession of the estates, for a longer period than ten years. It was, however extraordinary, a well-ascertained fact, that the preceding proprietors of Wingrave Manor, as far back as they could be traced, for a century at least, had individually, never continued in the ownership of the property, for a more extended period. Hence, a positive and superstitious belief was given to this tradition, by every member of the family, and by all their tenantry and connexions. In the rebellion of 1745, an ancestor had forfeited his life and property, though the estates were restored afterwards—another had, in bygone times, been killed by an accident, before each had held the family property for the space of ten years. It seemed as if fate had reserved a store of misfortunes for the members of this unfortunate family. Mr. Gerald Mortimer, the friend of my relation, had, as it was understood, succeeded to the estate on the decease of his

brother, who was drowned in his passage from Lisbon. At the time of our going to Wingrave, Mr. Gerald Mortimer had been in the possession of the property, and resident at the manor house, for nearly the whole of the awful term of ten years. I believe, it only wanted a short interval to the expiration of this period, and it had been arranged that my relative, who was acquainted with this tradition, should pass some time with his friend.

My recollections of this visit—of the old mansion—and of its inmates—are still vivid, and minute. It was on a bright autumnal evening, when we alighted in the solitary and wide court-yard. Solitary indeed it appeared, for the establishment kept by the proprietor, was small, and not at all commensurate with the style and size of the house. A warm welcome was given to us, and every preparation had been made for our comfort and convenience. Mr. Gerald Mortimer, and a Roman Catholic priest, who acted as his chaplain, were the sole inhabitants of this spacious dwelling. The former, who had passed the meridian of life, still retained good and expressive features, with a very gentlemanly appearance. Tall in figure, with a mild, but melancholy cast of countenance, he was calculated to produce, upon those with whom he associated, a favourable impression. His voice was low, and his general manners quiet and subdued. His companion, the chaplain, was of Flemish extraction, though well versed in the English language, which he spoke with but a trifling foreign accent. He was a scholar of many and considerable attainments, a gentleman in his general intercourse and habits, and warmly devoted to the cause of his own church. There was in Wingrave manor-house, a small antique chapel, studiously fitted up, and ornamented with all the requisite accessories of the Roman Catholic religion; and in which, matins, vespers and the other services, were strictly and regularly performed. At these, the

limited establishment of the mansion, being all professors of that creed, as regularly attended.

It might be supposed, that to a boy, as I then was, this place, and its daily routine, could have presented few objects of amusement or pleasure. But I was of tender and uncertain health, and not well adapted to join in the boisterous and exciting sports of youth. The tranquillity and silence of the old house, were agreeable to me, while the kind and condescending manners and attentions of Mr. Mortimer, and his reverend companion, soon won my good-will and respect. Indeed the chaplain every day, without any attempt at rigorous or exacting control, took considerable pains in my improvement and instruction. Occasional rides on a pony, as antiquated as the manor-house itself, fishing in some extensive ponds within the demesne, and the liberty of exploring the contents of a large library, were my never-failing amusements.

The visit of my relation, appeared to have been the source of great satisfaction to Mr. Mortimer and his companion. No doubt, the advent of so old a friend, must have proved an interesting variation in the uniform and solitary tenour of the life, which was led at Wingrave. Moreover, under the circumstances connected with the family, it was a decided relief and consolation.

Reginald, the son and heir of Mr. Mortimer, had been expected to join the party at Wingrave, as the term of his university course was nearly completed. But a severe illness detained him abroad, from which, he was slowly recovering, and this event tended to depress the spirits of the inmates of the paternal mansion. Other causes, of the effect of which I was then not so sensible, contributed to cast a gloom over the little circle. The actual day had arrived, on which, the period of ten years, during which, Mr. Mortimer had been in possession of his family property, would expire.

I well remember the serious and sad expression, which the countenances of Mr. Mortimer and his chaplain assumed. My relation fully partook of the general tone of melancholy thoughtfulness that prevailed. The usual social intercourse was carried on, almost in whispers. Mr. Mortimer was, for considerable portions of that day, engaged in private devotion in the chapel, in company with his reverend friend. When evening came, his manner was more silent, and abstracted, and his two companions earnestly redoubled their efforts to enliven him, but with little success. Young as I was, the infection of this silence and sadness, had reached me, and when the hour of bed-time summoned me from the sitting-room, I felt glad and relieved.

It had been a stormy and variable day, and on my retiring to bed, the war of the elements was in loud action. Sleep soon visited me, but it was uneasy, and disturbed by painful dreams. A heavy clap of thunder in the middle of the night awoke me. The window of my bed-room was tall and wide, and though divided by small, lozenge-shaped panes of glass, admitted the dazzling glare of the lightning, in its complete intensity. The moaning of the fitful wind, and the turbulent pattering of the rain at intervals, coupled with the influence of oppressive dreams, terrified me. My eyes wandered in alarm, to some tapestry covering the walls of the chamber in front of the bed, whereon were pourtrayed, in glowing colours, and in hideous imagery, the penalties and torments of purgatory. These, every now and then, were displayed with startling effect, by the power of the continued lightning. My ears were distracted by all kinds of real or fancied sounds, and under a paroxysm of uncontrollable fear, I jumped out of bed, and hastily clothing myself, rushed out of the chamber without any definite object or purpose, except that of escaping from the frightful visions around me.

The apartment opened into a long and narrow gallery, which was not lighted by any window at either end. I made my way, as well as I could, through the darkness, and though confused, with the idea of reaching the customary sitting apartments of the family. In my haste and perplexity, I must have taken a wrong direction, as I found myself on a small back staircase, which received some little light from a narrow window, at the top of the side wall. This was new to me, but I hurried down the steps, and passing through another corridor, my further progress was arrested by sounds, like the groans or plaintive cries of a human being in suffering, or bitter agony. A chill sensation crept through my frame at this unwelcome interruption. I endeavoured to recall my faint efforts of resolution, by the thought, that these sounds proceeded from the stormy gust which found its way through the passages. But the repetition of these groans, became too frequent and distinct, to admit of any further doubt as to their cause. During this time, I perceived a large door near to me, which was not entirely closed, and the rays of a light, were faintly streaming through the aperture. Rendered desperate by fear, I opened this door a little more, so as to allow me to survey what might be passing within.

To my surprise, I found, that I had by chance, reached a private entrance into the chapel. The rays of light proceeded from two tall altar candlesticks, which were placed before an image of the Virgin. Though such an interval of time has elapsed since this occasion, my recollections are clear and perfect. Before this image, a tall, thin, and spectral-looking figure of a female was standing. Her profile was visible, and I never shall forget the impression, which it made upon me. The countenance betokened great age, though nothing like decrepitude appeared in the figure. She was arrayed in a long, loose, and white garment: the head was uncovered, from

which, tangled, grey locks were hanging in wild profusion. The face was quite colourless, skinny, and angular, and exhibited little of animation, except in a pair of coal-black and lustrous eyes. This female figure, while tossing her long and bony arms wildly about, ejaculated in piteous accents—"Blessed Mary! what can a wretched creature do to be saved! Preserve me from eternal destruction!" Then uttering deep moans of agony, she walked hurriedly up and down before the image, still moving her arms with passionate energy. No one else was in the chapel, of which, I obtained a complete view, whilst the glare of the lightning from time to time, darted through the old painted windows.

Though trembling with intense fear, I hurried silently from the door, and with difficulty, retraced my way up the staircase, and through the passages, to my own apartment, the door of which, I had left open. Without venturing to look about me, I speedily returned to my bed, and hiding myself in the clothes, attempted to suppress every tendency to thought, or reflexion, whilst my teeth were chattering, and my limbs were shaking from the effects of painful terror. I passed the remaining hours of that night miserably, and in the morning, when the servant came into the room, he found me too unwell, to get up. Suffice it to say, that illness confined me to my bed-room for a week, and that it was ascribed to the alarm occasioned by the violent thunder-storm. I never communicated to any one what I had seen, or the real cause of my agitation.

When I became convalescent, and resumed my former occupations, I can remember, that I perceived a great alteration in the manner and demeanour of Mr. Mortimer. He appeared to have gained an addition of health and spirits. His former moodiness had given place to an inclination for lively and mirthful conversation, and a load of care seemed to have been

removed from his thoughts. I was naturally, from my youthful age, unable to reason mentally on these matters. But since that time, I have naturally reflected, that the cause of this alteration was to be traced to the fact, of the tradition as to the length of tenure of the Wingrave property, having failed of being verified in the person of the then possessor—for the ten years had been more than completed.

My mind was sadly harassed by the thoughts of the incident of that night. I could not decide, from some unintelligible cause, upon making a confidant of any one. Often on subsequent nights, I was bewildered by the recollection of the past, while continually tormenting myself by the speculation, whether I had beheld a spectre, and whether the house was haunted. However, I was not again disturbed by any such vision, and I never heard the slightest allusion made by Mr. Mortimer, or either of his friends, to any such a topic.

It has been already mentioned, that the manor-house was near to the sea-shore. In those days, a daring traffic in smuggling was carried on, in the vicinity, and though the revenue officers were generally on the alert, still contraband goods to a heavy amount, were successfully landed and conveyed into the interior. One evening, during our stay at Wingrave, a group of men, partly seafaring, and partly rustic in their appearance, were seen approaching the manor-house, bearing a companion stretched on a board, who was suffering from serious and recent wounds in his head. In fact, there had been an attack made upon the smugglers, by the revenue officers, in the course of which, though the officers were repulsed, the individual in question, was severely, if not mortally wounded.

This man had originally been in the service of Mr. Mortimer, and had afterwards, been placed on a small farm, as a tenant. The abetting of smuggling had grown into so general

a practice in that part of the country, that it was considered by all ranks, below the immediate gentry, as a profession, or employment, to which, no disgrace was attached.

The wounded man was deposited with little ceremony, in one of the most retired rooms of the manor-house, and the good offices of the inmates, having been secured, the other parties dispersed to their respective homes. Medical assistance was immediately procured, and Mr. Mortimer, whose humanity and kindness were never appealed to, in vain, had thus become, by compulsion, the host and protector of one who had offended most seriously against the law. It transpired, that there had been a sharp skirmish between the revenue officers and their opponents, in which, one of the former, had been killed. The knowledge of these circumstances placed the inhabitants of the manor-house, in a most responsible and embarrassing position. Mr. Mortimer by the shelter, and protection, which he was affording to the wounded smuggler, would, (if it were discovered) be considered as a participator in the transaction, if not an accomplice in the crime committed. On the other hand, he would not for one moment, consent to any proposition for surrendering the party into the hands of justice. As to his removal from Wingrave, it was out of the question, the wounds being of too dangerous a character. The sufferer was also a Roman Catholic, and a powerful, religious feeling was added to the influence of the other considerations, which acted upon Mr. Mortimer. There was no suspicion, that any one of the lawless companions of Harris, (the wounded man) or that any member of the establishment of Wingrave would betray, the fact of his reception, and concealment at the manor-house.

The grave nature of this last contraband attempt, and the calamitous result—the death of a government officer, occasioned great stir and talk throughout the district. After

reports were officially made to the proper quarter in London, the different authorities in the county, were, in consequence of orders transmitted to them, in continual and persevering activity. Revenue officers, aided by magisterial warrants, were roaming over the neighbourhood in all directions. A vigilant search was made for the parties engaged in the late violent proceedings, and especially for Harris, who had been charged as a principal in the same, and with the murder of the party killed. One day, soon after these events, three or four officers, made their appearance at Wingrave, and producing their regular authority, demanded, not only admission, but the unrestricted power of examination into every part of the house, and the demesne.

There was no shadow of a reason, or pretext, on which such demand could be resisted, or even evaded. The anxiety and nervous agitation of Mr. Mortimer and his chaplain, were painful to witness. Fortunately, they avoided immediate communication with the officers, for my relative himself, undertook the task of seeing, and speaking to them. If on their first arrival, the proprietor of the mansion, or his reverend friend, had held any intercourse with the officers, they could not have failed to betray the secret, by their own embarrassed and disturbed manner.

It has been noticed, that the mansion of Wingrave was very spacious. Like old houses of that date, its internal architecture and arrangement presented several opportunities, and facilities for security and concealment. Harris had been placed in a small room, near to the roof of the house, into which, there was a narrow and secret entrance. This was not at all likely to be discovered, by strangers to the place. A most scutinizing search and examination was made by the officers, who insisted upon having all the keys of the apartments delivered to them; but no one, was asked to accompany

them, and of course, no domestic volunteered to join them. My relative, as the friend of Mr. Mortimer, considered it advisable, to look after their proceedings, by way of protecting his interest. That gentleman, with his chaplain, had never stirred from a small study, where they often sat, and I believe they were, after suffering acute mental anxiety, engaged in prayer. A considerable period of time was employed in the examination of the premises; but the apartment, in which, Harris lay, entirely escaped discovery; and not even a suspicion was entertained by the parties, of the existence of any private entrance thereto. Towards the end of this inquisitorial visit, the inmates of the mansion were alarmed by piercing shrieks and loud exclamations. The officers, accompanied by my relative, were seen descending the principal staircase rapidly. Mr. Mortimer, the priest, and the servants generally who had assembled in the large hall, were wringing their hands in consternation and despair. But they uttered little, and appeared to be awaiting a communication on the part of the agents of the law. The latter, as they approached, were hurried, and breathless, and appeared like men, panic-struck. I heard the officers repeat several times, that the house was haunted; that they had seen a ghost, and this assertion was not contradicted by my relative. The chief, or leader of the party, however, declared, that he was satisfied that Harris was not within the house, and that a sufficient search having been made, they would no longer trouble the family with their presence; they accordingly took their final departure.

I can well recall to my memory, the evening of that eventful day—it was most gloomy and dispiriting. My relative hardly uttered a single observation. Mr. Mortimer and the chaplain were equally silent and abstracted. No questions were asked, or allusions even made to what had

passed. A feeling of distrust, and reserve, seemed to have paralyzed the whole party. It was distressing to witness such a strange suspension of social intercourse, and undoubtedly so singular a position could not well be long maintained. On the same night, my relation announced to me, that we were to leave Wingrave Manor, on the following morning. What passed in a private conversation, that took place between him, Mr. Mortimer, and the chaplain, I knew not. But in a hasty leave-taking which ensued on the next day, boy as I was, in years and feelings, I could not avoid being struck with the sorrowful and distressed looks of Mr. Mortimer and his reverend friend. My relation made no remark whatever, in the course of our journey homewards, on the family at Wingrave Manor, or on the incidents which had occurred there, beyond the observation, that it was a most unfortunate circumstance, that Harris had been an unlooked-for visitor at such mansion. There was a seriousness, in the general manner of my companion, and an evident determination to repress all opportunity for interrogation, which prevented me from asking any questions, or reposing any confidence in him, with respect to what I had seen and undergone at Wingrave. The necessary pursuits of my education, and other changing scenes of life, soon removed me far from the quarter, where these events had taken place. I never heard any circumstance or intelligence relating to Mr. Mortimer or Wingrave Manor, beyond a casual rumour that he was dead, and that it was probable, the residence, with the estate, would be sold. Gradually I ceased to think on the past, and on what had so disturbed my mind; and with the happy buoyancy of youth, I resumed my ordinary habits.

Years followed years, in quick succession. The relative, to whom, allusion has been made, had long since died, and I

knew of no one friend who had any connexion or acquaintance with Mr. Mortimer or his family. When I attained full manhood, my thoughts would sometimes wander to the illness, which I had sustained, when a child, at Wingrave, and to the strange causes of the same. Nothing in the ordinary course of society, occurred, at all relating to that part of the country, or to the persons, whom I once knew there. I was absent for some time, on the continent, and on my way home, being at Bordeaux, I found several of my countrymen in that city. Amongst the different persons whom I often met, there were an English gentleman and his wife, of the name of Cleveland, with whom I became intimate. They were a very agreeable and well-informed couple, well bred, and hospitable, and who had arrived at the middle term of life. With them, I passed the chief portion of the time, during which, I remained at Bordeaux. One day, while dining alone with them, the conversation chanced to turn upon the subject, of the strict regulations of the French custom-house authorities, and their endeavours to counteract some contraband attempts, which had been planned to be made in the Garonne. A parallel was drawn between the fiscal systems of France and England. On Mr. Cleveland's making an observation on the injurious tendency of high duties, and the consequent results of infractions of the law, my thoughts wandered back to the incident, which I had witnessed, when a child, connected with the unhappy effects of smuggling. I related to my hosts, the circumstances of the conflict between the revenue officers, and the offenders against the laws, and of the death of one of the former, by the hands of a tenant of the family, with whom, I was then staying. The county, and place, were mentioned by me, and I remarked, that after the lapse of so many years, the name, ("Harris,") of the offender, had not been forgotten by me, and that, I never heard, if he had

recovered from his wounds, and in such case, if he had escaped the pursuit, and penalty of the law.

One male servant was waiting upon us at the time, at dinner. He was a confidential domestic, who was treated with great consideration and kindness, by his master and mistress. I had often before, remarked him, as one, in appearance superior to his station. He was well advanced in years, and had a deep scar extending across his forehead, evidently the result of some severe accident. This person, who was in the act, of handing wine to me, at the time, I made the observation, just alluded to, trembled violently, and turning pale, let the glass which he held, fall on the floor. We were all much alarmed, for there was every symptom of a fit, or other sudden indisposition. But the servant recovering himself, declared, that it was but the slight effect of an illness, to which, he was periodically subject, and at the desire of his master, he retired, in order to lie down in his own apartment. Mr. Cleveland and his lady, were greatly concerned at this interruption of our repast, but I begged of them to use no ceremony, and Mr. Cleveland left us for a little time, to look after his servant, and to ascertain, if medical advice were necessary.

On his return, with a satisfactory account, we endeavoured to forget the circumstance, and to turn our conversation to more agreeable matters. But the spirits of my hosts appeared to have been influenced by what had occurred, and it required exertion, to maintain any discussion upon the general topics of the day. As the evening came on, the weather had become threatening and gusty. My memory, which had been put into action, by the little incident at the dinner-table, was busily employed in retracing the scenes of my boyhood, and particularly of that stormy night, when I fell ill, through fright, at Wingrave Manor. Desirous of doing my best to revive the spirits of my hospitable friends, by some more

exciting subject of discourse, I alluded to the superstitious belief, still prevalent in many countries, in supernatural appearances. As the wind roared loudly along the banks of the river, and through the rigging of the vessels lying near to the town, I told my friends, that the jarring of the elements reminded me, of a night, I had passed many years back, when I conceived, I had actually beheld an unearthly vision. The attention of my listeners was obtained. I proceeded to relate circumstantially, the whole of the events which had occurred to me, when at Wingrave Manor, naming the place and year, the appearance of the aged female, in the chapel, her agonised exclamations, my subsequent illness, and all the strange particulars attendant upon the search of the officers of the revenue, afterwards.

The demon of ill-fortune certainly presided over my actions, and had taken me under his special guidance on that day, at Bordeaux. I had scarcely finished my tale, when Mrs. Cleveland fainted, and her husband, who had previously betrayed signs of astonishment and intense interest, now hung over his wife, with affectionate anxiety. I was confounded. It seemed, as if I had been fated to bring annoyance and suffering to those, in whose behalf, I felt a friendly interest. We conveyed Mrs. Cleveland to her apartment, and apologising to her husband, for the mischief I had so involuntarily effected, I hastily took my leave.

When, in the solitude of my own lodgings, I reflected on what had happened. I was puzzled at the unaccountable result, of my unfortunate communications. I determined never to mention a word again, to anybody, which could bear upon the subject of Wingrave Manor, or the Mortimer family. On the next morning, I was preparing to call on my friends, to inquire after the health of the lady, when Mr. Cleveland himself visited me. Greatly delighted I

was, to receive favourable tidings of his wife, though she was confined to her own room, for the present. My apologies and excuses were interrupted by Mr. Cleveland in the kindest manner. He, with a countenance indicating seriousness and decision, expressed himself as being prepared to rely on my honour and confidence. I was taken by surprise, unable to surmise what was to follow, but giving him every sincere assurance, I listened with breathless attention.

My friend then entered into a long, clear, and interesting account, which he assured me, he had resolved on imparting, after much reflexion, and deliberation with his wife, attended by deep pain and acute feelings. The summary of his communication was the following :—He (Cleveland) was Reginald, the son of Mr. Mortimer, of Wingrave Manor. His father's elder brother, who was drowned on his passage from Lisbon, the former proprietor of the estate, left at his death, one child, a daughter, of about six or seven years old; she was heiress to the family property. Her uncle, Mr. Gerald Mortimer, was appointed her guardian, by his brother's will, and with whom she had been residing during her father's absence in Portugal. The family professing the strictest adherence to the Roman Catholic religion, the greatest pains were taken to bring up the youthful Barbara Mortimer, in its tenets and principles. Gerald Mortimer, with his son and niece, were staying at Bruges, when the death of his elder brother took place. In their family, there was a female, Eliza Kelly, who had for forty years, been a dependant and humble friend. She had acted as the nurse of the young Reginald, and had promised by solemn vows, to his mother on her death-bed, that she would never desert her charge, as long as life remained. Kelly was a woman of strong sense, feelings, and passions. She was bigoted to her religious creed, but Reginald claimed the largest proportion of her affections and feelings; to him,

and to his advancement in life, and as a consequence, to the interests of his father, she was firmly devoted. Mr. Gerald Mortimer was weak and irresolute in mind, and poor in circumstances, and when he reflected on his own embarrassed situation, on the discouraging future of his son, and the brilliant destiny of his niece, he was any thing but contented, and satisfied. Delusive reasonings, gradually convinced him, that it was an injustice, that so splendid an inheritance, should be enjoyed by a female, when there was a youth like Reginald, who after himself, Gerald Mortimer, stood next in succession.

The unsettled state of religious and political affairs, and opinions, which were then gaining ground generally, strengthened Mr. Gerald Mortimer in his conviction, that it would be proper, to educate his niece in a convent. Barbara was accordingly placed by him, in the house of a very strict, religious order in Flanders, with a communication to the head of the same, that this new inmate, was to be trained up, and accustomed to the prospect of entering her noviciate, and of eventually taking the veil. In Eliza Kelly, he found, an unscrupulous, active, and trusty partizan, and adherent in all his plans and designs. The chief and final object was to abstract Barbara Mortimer in her early youth, so entirely from all intercourse with her few relations, and the world, that she might afterwards, either by her own free-will, or by compulsion, be induced to embrace a conventual life—her uncle, in such case, presenting a liberal allowance to the convent.

Proceedings were carefully and warily taken. The little girl was deposited under the protection, or rather the custody of the superior of the religious house, while Mortimer, his son, and Eliza Kelly, and their confidential attendant (Harris) returned to England.

Mortimer took possession of Wingrave Manor and the

estates, assuming their complete management, but whether as the lawful owner, or as guardian to his niece, there was no other person interested, either as a relation, or connexion, to ascertain or dispute. Some time afterwards, Mr. Mortimer sent Kelly to Flanders, on receiving an account of his niece's illness, and she returned with the intelligence of her death. Her uncle, then took upon himself, without any evasion, the character of heir to, and master of the family property. In the course of a few years, Eliza Kelly was attacked by a brain fever, and though she recovered her bodily strength, she became subject to complete aberration of intellect, which was manifested by exaggerated religious fervour and discipline. At last it was necessary to seclude her from general society, and she was placed in a very private and unfrequented part of the manor-house. At times, it was found advisable to place some restraint on her, by securing the door of her apartment, but with the cunning of a lunatic, she often found means to elude this restraint, when she generally hurried to the chapel. Past transactions weighed heavily on her mind, her participation in the same, and her repentance for her share of criminality, were wildly expressed by groans and religious appeals. It was but too true, that the report of the death of Barbara Mortimer was a false expedient, devised and propagated by Mr. Mortimer and Kelly. This ill-used niece, had remained a novice and prisoner in her nunnery. For these reasons, Mr. Mortimer was most anxious, that no person out of the family, or of its circle of domestics, should be aware of the fact of Eliza Kelly, being an inhabitant of the manor-house, after the aberration of her intellects took place. My relative, who introduced me to Wingrave Manor, was ignorant of the fact; and the first intimation he received of the existence of such a person, was on the day of the search, made by the revenue officers. They, in the course of their visit, found this female, in a state of

violent, mental excitement, at the chapel-altar. Hence, Mr. Mortimer's alarm, and depression, at the defeat of all his schemes of concealment.

Mr. Cleveland further related to me, that when the revolutionary disturbances took place on the continent, the convent and its society were broken up, and dispersed, and that Barbara, who had not taken her vows, found refuge in a noble and generous family in the Austrian dominions. Here it was, that he had first become acquainted with her, when on his travels, after leaving the foreign university. Mutual confidences were given and received. The ill-conduct, and guilty motives of the parent were forgotten, or palliated by the honour, and disinterested affection of the son; for Reginald had at first loved and paid his suit to Barbara Mortimer, in perfect ignorance of her situation or relationship; looking upon her as a poor, and destitute orphan. They were married abroad, Reginald having merely communicated to his father, the fact of his marriage. Mr. Mortimer, who was always a prey to unceasing regret, repentance, and sorrow, had, after the breaking up of the convent, made many inquiries, but he had not succeeded in discovering the fate, or place of refuge of his niece. Reginald, in course of time, informed his parent, of the circumstances of the singular union, which he had formed, but they were never destined to meet again, as Mortimer died, before his son arrived in England. Reginald and his wife had little to attach them to a residence in their native country. They had no relations or ties therein,—and the remembrance of occurrences so disgracefully affecting the honour and character of his deceased parent, indisposed Reginald from continuing to live in a district, where such matters would come to light, and would attract disagreeable comments.

He obtained the regular, legal permission to change his name to that of his maternal family—Cleveland—and his wife

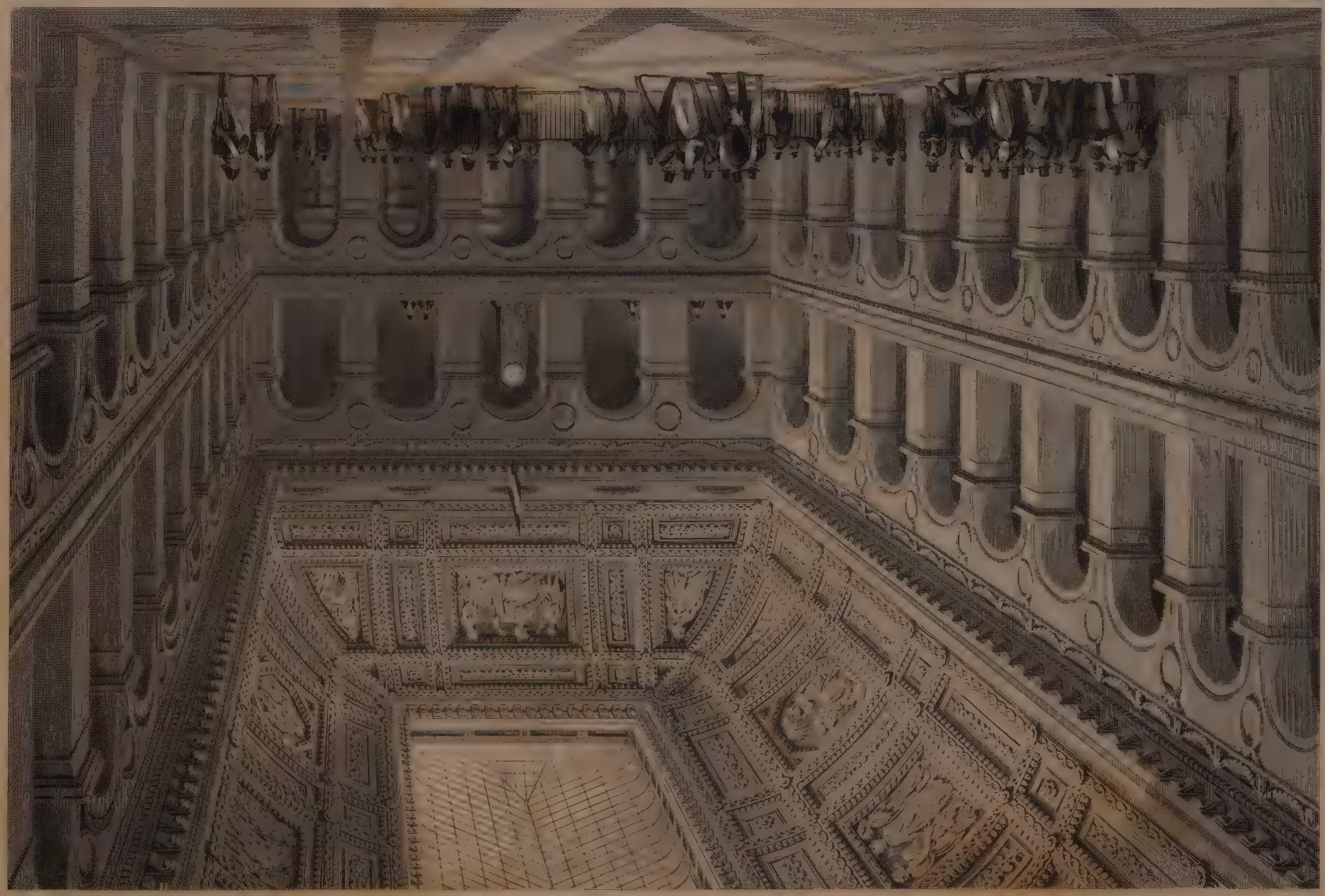
assenting, the estate of Wingrave Manor was finally sold, and conveyed to strangers.

Harris, who was acquainted with all the Mortimer history and secrets, and who was faithful and attached to the family, had in his youth, been led into the company and perils of contraband traders. He had certainly, in self-defence, been the occasion of the death of the revenue officer. In the long illness which followed his severe wounds, he attained a sincerely contrite and humbled state of feeling, and became an altered and improved man. He made, his escape abroad, on his recovery, and was received into the service of Reginald Cleveland. It only remains for me to add, that Cleveland and his wife, are resident on the continent, and that they occasionally, but rarely, visit England.

THE BOURSE.

BY ANNA SAVAGE.

It is a noble structure, softly falls
The light on its rich beauty, not a ray
But lingers lovingly on these proud walls,
That Paris claims as Art's, and hers to-day.
Through myriad arches break the golden beams,
Flooding the pictured forms with Genius rife,
Until each silent shadow, slowly seems
To kindle in the noontide's warmth, to life.
To whom is consecrate this noble shrine?
No swelling hymns are heard beneath its dome.
What heroes slumber here? What royal line,
Have found within its walls a gorgeous tomb?
No priest's deep "Benedicte" floateth by,
No outstretched hands bless here a prostrate crowd,
And for an Ave's solemn melody,
Voices are heard, but eager, harsh, and loud.
If temple it may be, what rites belong
Unto its altar, for but looks of woe,
And eager, anxious glances, mark the throng
That its broad marble floor pace to and fro.
Can these be worshippers in this fair fane?
Peace broodeth not above them, every brow
Bears shadows that her dove-like wing would stain,
And fright her weary foot from rest below.
"Mammon" they call the god, and Europe bends
Humbly before him. Mark, around us rise
His priests, his altars, while each nation lends
Victims to swell the costly sacrifice.



Oh, little care his devotees to scan
If bleeding hearts, and smothered sighs, and tears,
Mark his triumphal car—that man with man,
Breaketh for him the holy faith of years.
The ties of brotherhood—the love that gave
Thirst for life's holier aims, all—all thrown by
As worthless things, and still the self-made slave,
Clings madly to his false idolatry.
What heed they that the gifts, for which they call
In such wild words shall 'whelm the helpless? Fate
Hath made no soul so sep'rate, but his fall
Shall leave some one that loved him—desolate!
Gold! 'tis the Age's idol—'tis the aim
For which men toil, as though the world might be
Gilded with such poor sheen, to hide the shame
That watching Seraphs well may weep to see.
Oh, can it purchase one fond heart, or say
To anguished bosom, "Mourner, weep no more?"
Can it reanimate the lifeless clay?
Or to worn hearts, hope's early dream restore?
No! not for its rich promise, will the eye
That Death hath closed, look on our fruitless woe,
Nor cancel one harsh word, that mournfully
Doth rise with its remorse, though long ago
And carelessly 'twas spoken to the hurt
Of some tried heart and true. Oh! Gold, thou hast
Thy power—and thy limits, we pervert,
The blessings thou bestowest, and we cast
Curses, which might have been a murmured prayer
Upon our path, 'tis past—we sigh in vain.
The wealth of worlds 'twice told is bootless there,
It cannot purchase one lost hour again.

REGNIER'S VENGEANCE.

A THEFT FROM BOCCACCIO.

BEING A FREE TRANSLATION OF, BUT NOT SO FREE AS, THE ORIGINAL.

BY ALBERT SMITH, ESQ.

"*Une belle soirée d'automne*"—as M. Dumas would say in a *crime célèbre*, plunging at once into definite "medeas res," more satisfactory than the vague "once upon a time"—one lovely autumnal evening, then, all the good people of Florence who had nothing better to do, had turned out of the hot city to catch a little cool air, and a shady grape feast, and make a little love on the first slopes of the Appenine that overhangs the Val d'Arno, and as the numbers of those who had nothing better to do included nearly the entire population, there was a very goodly party. It was not to be wondered at that they preferred the leafy Fiesole to the baking flag-paved thoroughfares of the city, into which, on days of ordinary heat, we are told nothing but dogs and Englishmen venture. For here were thick trees and crystal waters, and smooth cool turf-plots, festooned round by teeming vines, from which depended such bursting clusters of dark luscious grapes, which any one might gather, that those who had a bit of bread commenced their feasting at once, without any other preparation. And those who had not, ate them alone; and were just as happy.

Happy indeed they were. Nothing was heard but laughter and music in every direction; and everywhere the laughter was so musical, and the music so merry, that it was difficult to tell when one merged into the other. We have all heard



laughter that had more meaning melody in it than the sweetest notes ever played on anything, from a piccolo to an ophycleide.

There were some very pretty persons amongst the women: in fact, all were more or less good looking. You need not go very far into Tuscany to see that this might be, whether the object was a *contadina* or a *dama nobile*. But one above all was so very lovely, that the eyes of the company—the men's especially—followed her wherever she went.

She was not above one or two-and-twenty, and as beautiful as the wondrous Venus in the Tribune, the prototype of which she might have been. As she moved about, the young cavaliers gazed at her so earnestly, that the handsome girls nipped the arms upon which they were hanging for very spite; and when at last she entered the villa and appeared at one of its windows, like a beautiful picture framed in stone, there was literally a murmur of admiration heard amongst the crowd. How additionally jealous the handsome girls became! and how dreadfully the young men envied the well-looking gallant who leant against the sill without, and commenced talking to her so familiarly! She placed her dainty hand on the stone-work—it was a well-chosen position to show off its beauty—and spoke to him again, looking through her eyes so softly, and yet with such intensity, that every ray of her bright thoughts appeared to converge to that focus. And yet it was only her own twin likenesses she was regarding in his pupils; and although she answered to the purpose in reply to his speeches, she was thinking more, all the time, of the appearance she presented to the multitude. You could hardly have thought that her sweet, mild face, expressing such love and confidence, could have been otherwise than the mirror of her mind. Alack! if all calm confiding eyes meant what they conveyed, Paradise would be at a discount!

This fair lady was a widow—young as she appeared. She had been married when a mere child to an old man; who, having worried her sufficiently for a year or two, went out of the world, leaving her a large fortune. And then she determined not to tie herself down to anybody again, but enjoy life as she listed; which was a determination not at all strange for a widow to come to, and especially one so young and very lovely as Elena—for so she was named. And the cavalier who was now speaking to her passed at Florence for her cousin. It is a charming relationship, that of cousin; especially when family differences, distant residence, or long growing-up absence, make a handsome young cousin just as good as no relation at all. And both the lovely Elena and her cousin Gianni thought this without doubt.

Apart from the crowd was another young cavalier, who had been looking at the interview with deep attention, as he leant against the stem of a silvery quivering olive near the villa. He was handsome too; but his features were paler than those about him. The Tuscan brow is always expressive and thoughtful; but his bore the stamp of far deeper meditation than characterized the faces of the other joyous guests. His garb was of sad-coloured cloth, plainly enough fashioned, but his good figure set it off to admiration; and in his hand he held a small book, which he had been, from time to time, reading, even in the middle of all this revelry. But as soon as he had caught sight of Elena, he carried out the confession of Francesca di Rimini:—

"Quel giorno piu non ve leggemmo avante."

The lady conversed awhile with the cavalier; but, with all her attention to him, was not unconscious of Regnier's admiration. So she parted her curls back with her white hand, and leant her cheek upon it, and performed one or two other of those

little acts which pretty women do, when they think they are being looked at. And, being as great a coquette as a beauty, she gave him now and then a very speaking glance with her bright eyes, to show that his admiration was perceived. Perhaps for so acting she had two motives. She wished to make Gianni slightly jealous, in order that he might appreciate her affection the more, and be the more anxious to preserve it—which is an excellent plan with lovers whose constancy one is somewhat nervous about; and she also thought, in the event of Gianni proving feeble-minded in his devotion, it would be as well to put by a sly admirer against the rainy day which her tears would certainly make it. And so she looked so bewitchingly, from time to time, at Regnier—unconsciously of course—that when at last she retired, his heart had fairly got into his head, and occupied all the space that his brains ought to have done. Practical anatomists may deny the possibility of so curious a displacement; but there are no bounds to the power of love in effecting the oddest changes in anybody.

From that night Regnier's books went out of favour. He tried to study, but he read the same lines over dozens of times, and even then could not tell what they were about. His fanciful thoughts of Elena half obliterated the letters: as the varied patterns of the lining of a trunk overcome by their intensity the modest literature they blot out. All the philosophy he had so deeply and so fondly studied in books proved of no use when he called it to his assistance; and at last this new disease of his heart increased to such a pitch, that he was obliged to call in further advice. But it was not a musty old Florentine physician. No: he sought the aid of a very dark-eyed, cunning girl, who was called Lauretta, and who was Elena's attendant—half companion, half servant; and by bribes and promises—to say but as little as possible about

a kiss or two—he got permission from the lady to correspond with her.

How he read the note—over and over again, although he knew it by heart; stops and dots and blots and all! And how many copies of his answer he wrote and destroyed, as he found them too free, or not passionate enough, or likely to be misconstrued, or over bashful! But at last he sent one off; and the very next morning, Elena and her maid, with Regnier, were all kneeling, side by side, at the mass in the Duomo; and they certainly were not so much occupied with the service as they ought to have been. But from that day they were more constant in their attendance than even any of the old women or priests of Florence. And this went on until winter; by which time, as subsequently happened to another, Regnier's only books were woman's looks, and folly was all they taught him.

But if love is blind, jealousy restores the balance to the passions, by being all eyes; and Gianni, not long in suspecting something, at last found out why Elena had become so devout. There was a terrible riot to be sure; and Elena threatened to throw herself into the Arno; and would perhaps have done it, but the cold weather had arrived, and the pea-soup looking stream, which untravelled poets speak of as "the blue Arno," did not look very inviting; so she thought twice about it, and the second thought was the best. But she cried at last; and when it came to that, everything was soon forgiven, and she and Gianni were friends again. And then she told him how he should be revenged at Regnier's cost.

The "Feste del Natale" arrived; and there was feasting and merriment all over the city, when one day Regnier received a note from Elena, bidding him come to a *petit souper* that evening at her hotel—all alone by themselves! Be sure Regnier had no "previous engagement," which, he regretted, "prevented him

the pleasure of accepting Elena's polite invitation." The first stroke of the hour had scarcely sounded from the Campanella when he found himself at the garden wicket, in a suit of wondrously fine clothes, new for the occasion; and, after a knock, as flurried and scarcely less loud than the beating of his heart, he was admitted, very cautiously, by Lauretta into the court; and the maiden told him that he must wait there a little while, for her mistress's cousin had arrived from Bologna, very suddenly, and she did not know what to do with him. Under other circumstances this would simply have been annoying. But it was winter, and the snow was beginning to fall and whiten the ground; and Regnier had new clothes, little calculated to meet it. However, he had no choice; so he said to Lauretta, "Oh! never mind," with as cheerful an indifferent face as his chagrin would allow him to assume, and he was left alone.

It soon got very cold. The snow fell faster and heavier, and there was not even an arbour under which Regnier could get for shelter. He tried all the doors that opened into the court, but they were all fast; and, at last, as he saw a light gleaming upon the falling flakes from one of the windows, he went towards it. On looking cautiously, he saw, through the casement, a small snug apartment. A wood fire was blazing upon the dogs of the hearth; and its glow danced and flickered on the carving, and glass, and richly-wrought productions of the *burin* of Cellini, with which the chamber was decorated. This looked aggravating enough; but, worse than all, at a table covered with delicacies—with golden and ruby flagons, and bright goblets of wine, and hot dishes, whose very steam appeared fragrant — enjoying themselves evidently, as only snug little parties of two can — he saw Elena and her cousin! It was not a very pleasant sight to look at; but anything was better than the dreariness of the wintry prospect elsewhere,

so he stood shivering and watching them, until his teeth chattered like a dice-box. His feet got so cold, too, that he was obliged to keep lifting them up, first the one and then the other, like the turkies learning to dance upon the hot plate; and his hands were so numbed, that if he had wished to pres Elena's taper fingers in them, he could not have done it. If one half of his imprecations had reached the saints to whom they were addressed, and been attended to, Gianni would have come off but badly. But the saints, just at that time of the year, were too much occupied generally to attend to individual applications for anything.

An hour went by, during which Elena and her cavalier still kept feasting; and Regnier was gradually losing all sensation, when Lauretta stole into the yard, to express to him the extreme sorrow of her mistress at keeping him in the cold so long, but that her cousin would not take any of her hints to depart. She, however, begged him to have patience, for enough supper was yet left for him; and then, assuring him that it would be dangerous for him to come into the house, once more left him to his desolate misery. At this Regnier's wrath increased so, that it was fortunate the weather was so intensely cold; for, if it had not been, his anger would have boiled over, and the consequences then would have been frightful.

Once more the churches gave out the hour, wheezing through the cold; and still Elena and Gianni remained in the room. Regnier never supposed it possible that people could eat so, or rather sit so long at table; and, to judge from the quantity he drank, Gianni's head must have been as strong as the Tower of Pisa. Still fresh logs were piled on the hearth; and still the blaze flickered and danced on the ruby Bohemian glasses and the old frames and carvings of the apartment. They were evidently merry enough; for he could

hear Elena's clear silvery laugh ringing through the window at some joyous *propos* of Gianni; and, at last, when the cavalier took up a mandolin and sang a popular love ballad to Elena, he looked so atrociously tender, and Elena was evidently so pleased, that Regnier's misery had nearly reached its climax. Now and then, too, they glanced towards the court, and then laughed to each other, until the lustres of the old chandeliers shook again, and this was repeated so often, that Regnier began to have some horrid suspicion of being the object of their fun. At last, shivering in his full-dress; covered with the snow, which still kept falling heavily, and completely beaten down in his spirits, he crept under a portico, that sheltered him a little from the cold: and making up a rude tent with some matting that he found, he gathered his cloak around him, and, heedless of the danger of doing so, went off fast asleep.

The day was breaking, cold and dark, when he was aroused by Lauretta, who came, feigning the deepest sorrow, to make the excuses of her mistress for her apparent deceit; and to beg he would go home as soon as possible, in case the people about should see him there, and spread it abroad in the city. She also hoped to see him that evening, at the hour before agreed upon. But as the burnt child dreads the fire, so a frozen man holds the snow in similar terror. Regnier having once fallen into the trap, was not to be caught again, and, muttering some words less courteous than condemnatory, he hurried home as well as he was able, and went to bed. The next day he found that he had nearly lost the use of his limbs, and he was in such agony that he could not turn without shrieking. The cold, which his anger and jealousy had prevented him from feeling to its full extent, had attacked, apparently, every nerve of his body; violent fever supervened; the first physicians of Florence despaired of his life,

and the nurses for many weeks never left his chamber. But as the summer came back, and not until then, Regnier got better. He had fought a stout battle with death, but his youth and good constitution aided him, and he once more appeared about in Florence, receiving the congratulations of his friends upon his recovery from so serious an illness;—albeit they did not know the cause. He recollected it, however, and still cherished intentions of revenge upon Elena for the heartless injury she had done him. An opportunity was not long wanting. Gianni had, according to custom immemorial in such cases, wearied of his attendance upon the beautiful coquette, and followed a fresh love to Rome, leaving Elena in the most bitter anguish. Her servant, Lauretta, who was much attached to her mistress, tried to console her in vain; and, at last, having read something about a philtre in an old work—it was some centuries before Donizetti was born, or she might have seen the *Elisire d'Amore* at the Pergola—she went about the city, inquiring everywhere for a doctor sufficiently learned to compound the love-spell for her. By a chance Regnier heard of this; and now came his time for vengeance.

He stained his face with certain juices, and allowed his hair and beard to grow; and, taking a small lodging in a retired quarter of the city, contrived to inform Lauretta that he alone could bring back the roving lover. When she came, not recognizing him, he told her that he must see her mistress, and that she might be assured of his succeeding in whatever she desired. Accordingly, Elena came, and when Regnier saw her, she looked still so lovely, gentle, and confiding, that all his old love was returning. But he recalled his sufferings, and the cruel trick she had played him; and then he determined on a terrible revenge, and trampled down all other feelings. He told her that when the moon was next at the

full, she must go, at midnight and alone, and bathe in a running stream, holding a little image of a saint, which he gave her, in her hands. Having done this, she must ascend to the summit of some elevated place or tower near the river; and there, turning towards the north, and saying certain cabalistical words that he would write down for her, she would see two lovely damsels approach, who would ask what she wanted. Upon telling them, they would disappear, when she might resume her clothes, and return home, where, before twelve hours had passed, her lover would come to throw himself at her feet, and swear love and fidelity for ever.

This process had been very artfully made up by Regnier. He knew upon part of Elena's estate there was a secluded rivulet, and near it an old tower, to the summit of which the shepherds were accustomed to climb by a rude ladder, to look after their flocks; and he made sure she would select this spot. As it proved, he was right. He sent her the charm; recommended the exact night; and then, as twilight stole over the Appenine, went and hid himself in a thicket near the tower.

Midnight came; still, warm, and moonlit. Not a breeze stirred the silver leaves of the olive; nor was a sound heard, except the gurgle of the rivulet, as it fell over the pebbles on the hill-side to join the Arno in the valley. Trembling with anxiety and fear, Elena stole quietly from her house, and took her way to the place appointed; where, gazing around her, and neither seeing nor hearing any one near, she rapidly undressed and crouched into the river, shivering with a pretty terror, as did the pale, tremulous water-lilies that quivered on the stream. Having done this, she crept back again, like a fawn, towards the tower, and mounted to the summit. As soon as Regnier heard her pronounce the charm—for he would not gaze from his hiding-place, less from feelings of propriety than for fear her exceeding beauty might move his

heart to compassion—he glided from his hiding-place, and quietly removed the ladder; after which he departed to the house of a friend who dwelt near, and left the beautiful coquette to her fate.

Meanwhile, Elena had finished the charm, and, the two nymphs not appearing, had repeated it, thinking the incantation might be strengthened by repetition. But still they did not come; so fancying that, for lack of a compass, she might not have exactly faced the north, she turned to all four points, and went through the charm at each; but the result was the same; and, at last, after waiting some time shivering in the cold air of day-break, she perceived a blush of red along the east that betokened the rising of the sun. Upon which, nearly overcome with fear, she prepared to descend, when she found, to her dismay, that the ladder had been removed, and was lying on the grass at the foot of the tower.

It was now evident that she had been made the victim of a most cruel snare, and her first suspicion fell upon Regnier. "He remembers the night I made him pass in the court," she said to herself, "and without doubt he will now come and release me." But, as the morning stole on, no living soul appeared, and then she burst forth into loud cries for help and lamentations, although no one was near to hear her. Beautiful, indeed, in all her misery she looked, as her dazzling skin threw back the bright rays of the sun. But we may only allude to her present appearance in an artistic point of view; and those who remember the Tribune, in the Florentine gallery, with its priceless contents, may call to mind a lovely statue—not more beautiful than was Elena on this fearful tower. At length, overcome by her fears, and her watchful night, she lay down upon the summit of the building, and fell asleep for two or three hours, under the shade of one side of the coping.

When she came to herself again it was mid-day. The sun was now blazing forth in all his power, and he darted his rays straight down upon the uncovered head and delicate skin of the unfortunate beauty. She tried to shield herself from the heat, but in vain. It caught her fair rounded shoulders, and neck, with agonizing pain; it struck upon her head until her brain appeared to boil; and the stones upon which she lay were glowing as though a fire was beneath them, until her white skin peeled and shrivelled like parchment. There was not a breath of wind abroad; and, to add to these exquisite tortures, a cloud of gnats and stinging insects collected about her. Again she shrieked for help, but no one heard her. The heat had kept the very labourers at home; and apart from the river—the sparkling water of which only increased her dreadful thirst by its tantalizing plenty—apart from its murmurs, nothing was audible but the cracking of the bursting seed-pods, or the song of the restless grasshoppers in the dry grass, chirping about as if in derision of her anguish. All hope appeared to have gone; and the hapless beauty had now only to look forward to a miserable death, as she sank down upon the summit of the tower, just contriving, as a last chance, to raise her head above the parapet, that she might, if help came near, avail herself of it.

Towards afternoon Regnier came down to the river to gloat upon his victim; for the still keen remembrance of her perfidy had turned him into a fiend. As she saw him approach she made an effort to speak; and, with streaming eyes, she begged him to give her a little water to moisten her dried and burning lips, or to kill her at once, as death would be a boon in her present agony. But he was inexorable. His ferocity increased with its gratification, and he coarsely told her that, like a serpent, she would but change her skin to appear more beautiful; and then, albeit he knew by her faltering voice that she

was keenly suffering, he left her, and went his way; upon which she dragged herself to the centre of the tower, and prepared there to die.

It happened as the afternoon advanced, and the sun declined, that one of her herdsmen, looking after some stray cattle, came near the tower, and hearing a faint wailing on the summit, called out to know the cause. With great pain Elena contrived, in a few broken words, to send him for her servant, who had been all day in great alarm at the non-appearance of her mistress. Lauretta was quickly at the tower; and when the ladder was replaced, she carried her clothes to her mistress, and aided her to dress, as well as her terror would allow; and then, with the assistance of two more of the herdsmen, she got her down, and carried her to the farm, where the country people immediately did every thing their simple knowledge dictated to alleviate her sufferings. But she was long ill; and, when she at last arose from her bed of anguish, all traces of her beauty had departed. Her spirits were crushed and gone, and she only left the farm-house to enter a convent.

Regnier said nothing about the affair in Florence; less, however, from regard for Elena than for his own sake. But he felt bitterly ever after that he had carried his vengeance too far; and, renouncing gallantry, took to his books again, and wrote a treatise to prove that all attachments of the kind he had cherished, have never any other end than that of wretchedness and self-reproach.

And to this may be added a piece of advice in the very words of the original chronicler, who, after relating all we have told above—and a great deal more that we have not—thus concludes:—

"E perciò guardatevi, Donne, dal beffare, e gli scolari spezialmente."



J. Hayter

ON THE PORTRAIT

OF

THE COUNTESS OF ESSEX.

List the while I sing,
  For my theme is beauty;
While resounds the string
  Listening is a duty.

She who wakes my lay
  Lovely lips possesses,
Eyes as clear as day,
  Rich and clustering tresses;

Bosom like the snow,
  Cheeks like new-blown roses,
Fair and open brow,
  On which peace reposes:—

Hold—e'en while I tell
  Of her beauty's glory,
By the limner's spell
  Here she stands before ye!

THE DESTINY OF THE POET.

BY MRS ABDY.

"It has been computed that poets die at an earlier period than any other class of persons."

And can it be true that the Minstrel must go
From this beautiful world in the prime of his days?—
Must he leave the loved scenes of enchantment below,
Enshrined in his fancy, extolled in his lays?

Must the joys that he pictured in glowing romance
So soon to his sight become clouded and dim?—
Must Beauty's bright smile, and Affection's kind glance,
Exhaust their soft magic so quickly for him?

Alas! 'tis too true: to the laurel and lyre
A penalty certain and sad is assigned;
And the gifted one kindles his funeral pyre
By the brilliant and perilous light of his mind.

Thus dwelling with men as a stranger and guest,
Soon passing away from the hall and the hearth,
Oh! should he not study his strains to divest
Of the vanities, follies, and trifles of earth?

Though Fame may be dazzling—though Love may be dear,
His lot in a region more glorious lies;
And he ever should lead his fond votaries here
To dwell on his future abode in the skies.

The burden of years he is called not to bear;
To a cold common world he is lent, and not given;
And his lays, through his fleeting existence, should wear
The bright and indelible impress of Heaven!

THE WANDERERS IN THE PARKS.

BY ELIZA WALKER.

"Poor wayfarers of the world!"

SHAKESPEARE.

We think it must have struck all whose habits and tastes lead them often as visitants to the metropolitan parks, that there is a class of persons frequenting them which seems peculiar to the locality. Their prototypes are to be met with in the gardens of the Tuileries and Luxembourg at Paris, more especially in the latter. Loiterers—loungers—wanderers; each word may designate them, yet neither embodies precisely the individuals we mean, nor presents them to the eye of the reader.

Before discoursing further of our "wanderers," let us remark, we are not referring to the mere gaping "sight-seers" who, from London's remotest limits, throng every avenue of the Green and St. James's Parks on the days of her majesty's drawing-rooms, or any announced "royal progress." The aim and motive of these are legibly written in their gait and manner, leaving nought for the imagination to build its airy structure on. Neither do the banks of the Serpentine, the promenades of Hyde Park—when, the "season" in its full tide, congregates there the lovely, the idle, and the gay—furnish forth, amongst its countless masses, the beings we treat of. They are not of those who follow in the wake of royalty or grandeur, or swell the ranks of pageantry and fashion. Such

sights and scenes assimilate not with the "poor wayfarers of the world;" and such every external denotement of the class we write of proclaims them to be. Aimless—purposeless—with drooping aspect, vacant eye, and sorrowful bearing—who can doubt them to be "out of sorts with fortune?" They pace the walks, or, more frequently, lounge upon the benches, with the air of those to whom the world without, with its pleasures and its luxuries—its business and its interests—is but as a "passing show." They carry in their forlorn and lonely bosoms their own little world, peopled with thoughts, experiences, hopes, and fears, which have neither accordance nor sympathy with the mass without.

Amongst those I am endeavouring to sketch, my own sex are in the minority, and bear no proportion to the other. Occasionally, it is true, we see a specimen, with the same hopeless, hapless dejection characterizing their every movement. Such an one we encountered a short time since in the enclosure of St. James's Park. It was one of the gorgeous evenings this our recent golden summer has lavished on us, to cheer and gladden with its balmy influences. A light shower had but lately fallen, giving freshness to the flowers and shrubs, and verdure to the grass, and filling the air—aye, London's oft despised, oft ridiculed, murky air—with sweetness and fragrance.

"The moon was up, and yet it was not night,"

for still over the beautiful, time-honoured, stately turrrets of Westminster Abbey—that dearest structure to an English heart, with its glorious memories, and proud, fond associations—lingered the last brilliant sunbeam, lighting up with its vivid lustre all its architectural nobleness and grandeur. Groups of lovely, happy children, were gamboling in all directions; their shouts of gleesome, innocent mirth mingling with the passing

breeze, and filling the air, to my woman's ear at least, with music sweeter than harmony's divinest strain. Throngs of well-dressed pedestrians, looking cheerful and contented, were promenading about, and watching and feeding the pretty aquatic birds floating on the surface of the tiny lake. Altogether the scene was a pleasing and animated one. Yet amidst it, in sad and sorrowful contrast to the prevailing cheerfulness, was one poor girl: she was an occupant of the same bench on which I was sitting, and my attention was painfully attracted towards her, not alone by the fixed sadness legible in her worn, yet still interesting face, but by the long-drawn, almost convulsive sighs, which I could not but be sensible burst from her bosom. She was evidently one of those whose ranks comprise perhaps a larger amount of mental suffering than is to be found in any other; they who, as the phrase goes, "have seen better days." Arrayed in the faded garb of past prosperity—in an old, palpably dyed, silk gown; a bonnet of the style and shape long exploded by fashion's mutable sway; a little thin shawl, of the cheapest manufacture; gloves soiled and mended; and all the other accessories of her dress equally mean and valueless—there was yet, despite the drawback of so decayed a toilette, the air of a lady visible throughout. My mind adopted her as having possibly filled the situation of governess or companion. Now, perchance, she was without an appointment; and having exhausted the little fund gained by harder drudgery than the most laboriously-tasked artizan endures, might be, alas! left to struggle in the cold, bleak, wide world, without friends, occupation, or money—almost without home. From a little bag she held in her hand she ever and anon drew forth a letter and read it. Did it contain assurances of affection, speaking balm and consolation to her desolate heart? Or was there promise of aid—hope for the future—conveyed in its written characters? Whatever its purport, a

faint smile played over her poor pale face after its every perusal. I was so interested by the despairing forlornness of her *tournure*, that I could not resist accosting her—making a passing remark on the beauty of the evening. She seemed scarcely to heed my words, answering by the query—"Is it beautiful?" and immediately after, as if to check further advances on my part, rose up and quitted the seat. Poor wayfarer! whither did you go, and what has been your fate?

But, as I have already remarked, my sex are the exceptions amongst the "wanderers," by far the greater number being men. They, perhaps, seek the parks, not alone to commune on their fate, and wrestle with it in comparative seclusion, but that, in these lesser thoroughfares of life, the chances are fewer of coming in contact with "the old familiar faces" who greeted them warmly when the sunny beams of prosperity lit up their path, but now, when the shadows of poverty darken it, pass with the chilling bow, or unrecognizing glance.

A man suddenly hurled from affluence to penury is always to me an object of far greater commiseration than a woman in a relative position. We, alas! for the truthfulness of the words, are born to suffer in all and every way; and the loss to us of "this world's goods," carries with it by no means the measure of trial and anguish—bitterness and agony—which it does to men. It is through the affections women are vulnerable. Take from them houses and land—the broad acres, which, from infancy's earliest hour, they were told and taught was theirs by inheritance—or the accumulated thousands which some tender parent, "rising up early, and late taking rest," had gathered for their use and benefit, and they will bear the bereavement with a brave heart and unquelled spirit; but wrest from them the heart where their treasure is vested, and how is the infliction borne? Loss of peace, of health, and even of life itself, is often the consequence and result. It

is therefore the conviction that the sterner sex feel the deprivation of silver and gold as so heavy a dispensation, which makes me look on those whom I know or fancy have undergone the ordeal (and such, whether erroneously or not, I deem the subjects of my present paper have) with such pitying eyes. Oh! the misery and the anguish I have seen branded in the faces of these "wanderers" of the parks.

Perhaps one has been a merchant, who, with labour and perseverance, had amassed wealth—perilled it all in some frail venture, and lost; and now, when life is in its "sere and yellow leaf," he must begin existence again, with capital shipwrecked—faith destroyed—energies paralysed! Another possibly is the struggling man of letters, the artist, or the sculptor, pining away in manhood's prime, from lack of the fostering patronage to develop their genius or embody some glorious creation; and they tread the shady walks, revolving how the gaunt poverty which, like a grim spectre, menaces them, is to be warded off, or confronted with. That lonely, sad-looking man, sitting on yonder bench, is, peradventure, a professional man, who, with a large family dependent on his individual exertions—how often ill-remunerated!—is forced to maintain a respectable exterior, when an under-current of embarrassment and debt is sapping the foundation on which he stands, leading, by stealthy but certain steps, to ultimate and engulphing ruin.

It may be any of these unfortunates who cross our path in our daily stroll, enlisting, so vividly and profoundly, our keenest sensibilities.

Whatsoever the griefs ye struggle with—whatsoever your ulterior doom and destiny be, "poor wayfarers of the world," one sympathizing voice, in the spirit of Christian charity, when she bids you farewell, prays God to speed you in your onward course.

TIVOLI.

BY JOHN KENYON, ESQ.

So, Pilgrim-friend, at length I see thee stand,
(Thy long-vowed vow) in this Ausonian land,
To view the Mighty Anio face to face,
And bow before the Genius of the Place.

And who such vow fulfils, or soon or late,
At this Great Shrine, but deems the day—a date,
Whence to recall at will, his whole life's length,
Resounding Stream! thy Beauty and thy Strength?

Yet 'tis a fearful Beauty. Sound and fear,
All types from clashing waters, all are here;
Mad strivings, sullen glooms, outbursting ire,
With flood still swifter than pursuing fire.

Wouldst Thou a milder vision? Turn and view,
Above—yon graceful fane, of time-touched hue;
There, where it stands, with circling columns bound,
And placed, how calm! above the gulf profound;
And, like some lovely and high lineaged Queen,
Who soothes a raging crowd with look serene,
Tames down these rugged rocks—this torrent's stress
With Power of Beauty and of Gentleness.



ON LEAVING MY VILLA.

BY WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR.

I GAZE with fond regret on you,
  My cypresses, so green and tall,
And sweet acacian avenue,
  Because I nursed and rear'd you all.

On you with fond regret I gaze,
  My hall, with vine-leaves trelliced o'er,
Because I've seen you many days,
  And never am to see you more.

I gaze on you with fond regret,
  My children! for you may be told
That love (like mine, too!) can forget—
  Only with death does love lie cold.

LINES.

BY MRS. W. P. O'NEILL, LATE ALICIA JANE SPARROW.

Like blossoms that yield not their fragrance till crush'd—
Like music that seems not so lovely till hush'd—
The heart of the poet, when pierced to the core,
Gives forth sweetness more rich than it offered before!
Yet that sweetness is never so prized by the crowd
As when the sweet singer lies mute in the shroud!

SONNET.

Rememb'rest thou, sweet love, an aged Oak—
The mightiest that graced the forest glade—
His giant branches gave but little shade,
So ancient was he, for when Spring-tide woke,
Her joyous voice to him all vainly spoke,
Bidding him be in verdant garb arrayed,
For blasting Time his palsied hand had laid
Upon him, and he withered 'neath the stroke.—
Beloved! the day those soft soul-beaming eyes,
That now into mine own confiding gaze,
Beheld that tree, I first had dared to raise
My hopes to words, and to translate my sighs
To love's avowal.—Sweetest, make confession,
That Time, which much destroys, ripens true Passion!

LOUISE DE MONTEMAR.

A TALE OF THE PAST.

BY ISABELLA MUNRO.

It was a summer evening of sunny France, about the middle of the thirteenth century, and two young and noble ladies sat in one of the stone balconies of the ancient palace of Vincennes, looking forth on the fair scene of glowing sky, and, in that ruddy light, scarce less glowing woods, that met their view. The cheek of the younger—we can scarce say the fairer, for her companion boasted almost equal loveliness—rested on her hand; and though her eye wandered over the scene, it seemed as though she saw it not. The elder lady scarce looked around her, appearing earnestly engaged in studying the dreamer's countenance.

"Where can her thoughts be?" she mused; "her only relative, the Count de Montemar, is here with her at the court, yet are they far distant; there is some secret here of which I wist not."

At this moment a young noble issued from one of the avenues, and, as he passed beneath the balcony, he checked his steed, and gracefully saluted both its occupants; though the humility of his obeisance to the younger lady far exceeded that with which he recognized her friend.

A passing cloud overspread the snowy brow of Virginie de Fontaines as she noted the preference thus betrayed; but after a moment's silence she spoke, addressing her companion in one of the sweetest, most musical, most entrancing voices

that ever thrilled upon the ear. "Fair Louise, whither roam your thoughts? Often have I heard you speak of the pleasure you take in the fair scenes of nature; here is one of the fairest in broad France spread before you, yet you heed it not. Anon the young and handsome Count Albert de la Roche greeted you with his most graceful bow, yet you perceived it not. I suspect me," she added with a smile, "some absent one is chargeable with all this insensibility."

"My thoughts had indeed wandered to other scenes and absent——"

"Persons!" added Mademoiselle de Fontaines, laughing, as her companion paused. "Nay, you need not tell me, I can guess your whole romance: the gallant son of some neighbouring noble, who boasted more high blood than broad lands, laid his barren laurels at the feet of the heiress of Montemar, who loved him for the brave deeds he had for her sake done; but her stern sire, doubting whether they were not for her lands' sake, banished the bold suitor from his castle, and brought his lovely heiress to Vincennes, that under the auspices of our good Queen Blanche, she might wed some one more worthy to be lord of the princely possessions of Montemar."

The dark eyes of the speaker dwelt searchingly on her companion's face, as her silvery tones died away; but their winningness had opened the unpractised heart of Louise de Montemar, and she replied, smiling—

"Nay, there you are in error, for father as well as daughter approved the suitor; he made but one condition—that as he had no son to bear the cross he had himself borne in his youth, he who aspired to such title should first assume it, and couch lance in the cause of the Holy Sepulchre."

"Then wherefore this abstraction?"

"Whether he be in life or death I know not; for from the

day of his departure I have heard no tidings of him," Louise mournfully replied.

"Then is he unworthy to be remembered," said Virginie loftily; "cast him from your heart!"

Louise shook her head—"So says my father; but it is not easy to forget one to whom I was affianced from my infancy, and by whom I believed myself loved even from my childhood."

Virginie smiled at the artlessness of the confession. But after a minute's pause observed—"Louise, you may have tidings of him in a few hours if you will."

"How?"

"To-morrow we go to Paris, to spend a night with my kinswoman, the Countess de Serres; to reach her hotel we must pass the shop of Aldini the perfumer. Ladies ever want perfumes, you know," she added jestingly; "we will visit him, and demand to see what he hath that is rarest and most precious; whereupon, if rumour belieth him not, he will conduct us to the presence of the great Italian magician, Giulio Bernardi, who can show the knight his ladye-love bestowing the embroidered glove or kerchief on a rival—the maiden her lover pressing to his lips the treasured lock of hair."

"Nay, if he deal but in such tokens, he could show me nothing," said Louise, "for my knight took nought from Montemar, save my silver-haired spaniel, its mistress's heart, and her father's blessing. But, in good sooth, dear Virginie, we may not visit this magician—it would bring nought but evil and sorrow upon us."

"It would bring nought save the knowledge of how highly prized by our brave knights are your favourite and my scarf."

"Our knights!" exclaimed the heiress, in surprise.

"Yes, truly, and wherefore not, sweet lady?" demanded Virginie playfully. "Dreamed you that none save Louise de

Montemar had need to seek the Italian's aid to bring the absent to their view?"

"Yet must we not go, fair Virginie," said Louise with earnestness. "To seek the aid of magic, instead of relying on God and all his saints, will it not place us within the influence of the powers of evil?"

Her companion laughed; but Mademoiselle de Fontaines was one of those persons who conceal beneath an air of amiability, badinage, and most surpassing sweetness, a wilful and determined spirit, and a fearless heart; and few indeed were the interprises on which she resolved which ever had been foiled; no marvel then that in so small a matter as that of misguiding a young and inexperienced girl—one, too, on whom she had lavished so much apparent affection, and over whom she had acquired a great and growing influence—she should be in the end successful.

The morrow's declining sun saw them at the door of Aldini the perfumer, in prosecution of their secret errand. Louise trembled violently, from irrepressible agitation, and frequently entreated her companion to return, pleading a foreboding of evil, and a consciousness of doing wrong which must tempt its presence; but Virginie alternately caressed and rallied her, until the rubicon was passed, and they stood within the abode of magic.

A strange and fearful place was that chamber, with its only light, a scanty portion, admitted through a lofty stained glass dome, and just enabling the visitors to perceive the uncouth, and, in some instances, appalling forms of the many brazen vessels and machines that met their view; while above their heads swung suspended reptiles of every description, from the tiny lizard to the mighty serpent, stuffed and twisted into even more than their living repulsiveness and ugliness—till, in that dim light, the startled girls could scarce believe

them otherwise; and Louise, who had hitherto so greatly dreaded the sight of the magician, now heard his approaching step with a sensation of relief.

Giulio Bernardi was a tall, slender man, with a dignity of mien which his strange oriental garb tended much to heighten, and which, natural or assumed, was calculated to impress the timid with reverence, and ensure respect from those who, in mockery or in earnest, came to test his pretensions and the potency of his spells. His countenance was calm and cold, and it seemed as though the years which had passed over him, had, in their flight, borne away from his features the expression—as from his heart the feeling—of interest in his kind, or sympathy with their sufferings or their joys; while his bright, steady, searching eye, felt, to whomsoever its glance was fixed upon, as though it could pierce into the very heart, and read its inmost secrets.

"Maiden, what would you with me?" said the Italian, advancing to Virginie, and speaking in a slow, deep, yet harmonious tone, which, clear and sweet as it was, wore all the coldness which his aspect indicated.

"Tidings of the absent," she replied.

"Is the person in France or beyond its limits?"

Virginie paused—a doubt arose in her mind; should *she* first seek to annihilate distance, and bring her lover to her sight? Another moment, and by a wave of her hand she referred Bernardi to her companion.

"He dwells in—Palestine;" so was the same question answered by Louise, after a moment's hesitation—she could not in *that* place use the accustomed appellation.

"I asked thee not *where*, maiden," said the magician sternly. "If he be on the face of the earth, to me it matters not where, he shall appear before you. Write on this scroll his name, and the hour in which you saw him last, then roll it up."

While Louise was engaged in fulfilling his commands, Bernardi himself was busied in preparations. He drew aside a curtain which concealed an alcove, in which stood a large mirror of singular brilliancy; before it was a brazier on a marble stand. He next placed on the brazier some small pieces of gums of various hues, and a pile of fragments of aromatic wood; then, holding on high a vial full of some clear white liquid, poured it on the pile. Even as he poured, a brilliant flame arose, and in a few seconds a fragrant cloud filled the apartment.

"Let silence reign around," said the deep voice of Giulio Bernardi, as he raised the scroll and cast it into the flame. Then his voice was heard uttering in earnest and solemn strains the words of some unknown tongue.

As she heard the parchment crackle, and felt the decisive moment was at hand, the heart of Louise beat yet quicker, as she pressed closer to her companion—her only protector—for *there* she dared not breathe one prayer to the virgin for aid, nor even make the sign of her faith.

In a few minutes the voice ceased, the fire sank to ashes, and the smoke cleared away. Louise clasped her hands. The mirror before her seemed no longer a mirror, but a picture. It depicted the interior of a tent, through an opening of which might be seen the yellow sands and lofty palm trees of an eastern land; on one side of the tent was a couch, on which lay the defensive armour of a knight; the shield was turned towards them, and the device, a flying heron, was distinctly visible. In the centre sat a youth, attired in a white mantle, the red cross on whose shoulder proclaimed him its champion. In person he was tall and stately, his features were delicate and clearly cut, and, but for the brilliant black eye and thick moustache, his appearance might have been deemed effeminate.

When first presented to their view, the knight sat with somewhat downcast head, resting his brow on his hand, as if in meditation; but, after the lapse of a minute, a small and very beautiful dog, which had been hitherto unperceived, darted from one end of the couch and sprang upon him. The crusader fondly caressed the graceful creature, as white even as his own spotless mantle; it laid its silvery head upon his shoulder, with the air of one that had never been taught it could intrude. Anon the dog leaped to the ground, and gambolled sportively to and fro, as though at once to prove its joy and win its master from his saddening thoughts. The knight smiled as he watched it, and when at length the tiny foot became entangled in the folds of a blue and silver scarf, which depended from a remote table, he started from his seat, and though ere he could reach it, the struggling animal had obtained release by rending the slight fabric from end to end, the knight merely smiled again, and taking his playful favourite in his arms, turned away, careless that in so doing his own foot trod upon the fractured scarf.

At this moment an impatient and scarcely suppressed exclamation burst from the lips of Mademoiselle de Fontaines, and at the same instant a cloud appeared to roll over the surface of the mirror, and the vision which had given such pleasure to the heart of Louise de Montemar had disappeared.

"Methought I enjoined silence," said the Italian pointedly.

"You did, fair sir,—and you, dear Louise, I crave your pardon for thus abridging yon wondrous vision. But truly the exclamation was involuntary; I remembered not that what we gazed on was unreal, and had nearly laughed to see how lightly your knight regarded the rending of his scarf."

The magician bent his dark searching eyes upon her countenance, and a strange smile overspread his own.

"Nay, dear Virginie, it mattered not," replied Mademoiselle de Montemar, affectionately. "Already had I seen all I needed, and I have you to thank for the happiness it has afforded me. And now, dear lady, shall not the Signor Bernardi show you a like kindness?"

"Not this night, it waxeth late, and ere now my aunt expects us. Some other day, signor, I shall crave your good offices."

As Virginie de Fontaines spoke, she rose from her seat, and bowing haughtily to the Italian, turned to leave the apartment. The gratitude of Louise prompted her to place a princely recompense on the table of the magician, ere bowing her leave. As she passed towards the door, she brushed by one of the serpents, which at the touch swung round upon its wire.

"Lady, beware of the adder!" said Bernardi, as he perceived it. His tone seemed less cold than hitherto, and Louise looked up at him in surprise, but his aspect was calm, passionless, and chilling, as was its wont.

How rapidly are the passions of the human heart sometimes developed! Mademoiselle de Fontaines had entered that chamber with feelings of indifference to the companion for whom she had always professed so much affection, and to whom she had attached herself, merely because the former, being one of the greatest heiresses as well as one of the fairest ladies in France, was certain to become a person of considerable consequence at the court, and that by means of her influence over the unsuspecting girl, she might herself possess a reflected lustre, as well as a degree of power she could not otherwise acquire. For fair, and well-born though she was, Virginie's ambition far exceeded her beauty, and yet more, her rank and riches. But when she left the scene of that magical illusion, it was with strange and bitter feelings swell-

ing within her bosom, and almost overtaxing her powers of concealment. She also, like Louise, had beheld the object of her affection—nay of her passionate attachment; but, unlike the heiress, it was to know that she was scorned. For when Virginie de Fontaines by the force of her Circean spells, which had erewhile bound many a victim, fascinated the young knight who tarried at the court for a brief space, ere he departed for the Holy Land, she found that she had not herself escaped unscathed, but that in striving to captivate him, she had fallen into the toils, and loved him with a devotion of which she had not dreamed that her own heart was capable.

When, therefore, the object of her firm and ardent love was summoned before her eyes as the affianced of another, it was the very violence of the shock which enabled her to endure it with apparent calmness. And, besides, there was for a time the doubt whether it was his truth or falsehood to Louise which should be then revealed; and might not *she*, the latest seen, the latest loved, live brightest in his memory? But when the phantom knight sprang forward, and the scarf —her scarf, her almost proffered gift—was crushed contemptuously beneath his foot, then, also, the fleeting passion of rivalry was crushed within her heart, to be succeeded by the more noxious and enduring weed of bitter hatred. All the sufferings of a life of pain and anguish seemed crowded into that moment of wildest agony, which had well-nigh betrayed her by its intensity; and though the next found her calm and self-possessed, it was but the smooth snow on the volcano where fire is raging furiously beneath. The bright vision which she had so loved to dream had vanished, and she had been rudely awakened to find herself despised—to know that she could woo and win, but for a time, and be forgotten, when her bright eyes and brighter smile were no longer

gleaming round him, and those soul-subduing tones which had entranced him were no longer breathing their spells into his ear. Like a cloud, which for a while may float between the star and the fountain on which its rays are wont to rest, so had she been, and so had she passed away, fading into nothingness, leaving no trace on the cold waters, while the starbeam shone forth again brightly as ever on their bosom.

All this was very hard to be endured by a heart so wilful, so passionate, and ill-disciplined as was her own; and, perchance, it was the harder that the passive star which, without an effort, had dispelled her influence, was the soft and gentle girl whom at her will she ruled, and whom she half despised for the very gentleness which made the task so easy. Yet she visited not on Louise the fickleness of her absent lover; for her manner was still as affectionate, her voice as endearing, and her time as devoted to the confiding girl, as they had been of old. Yet there was a change in Virginie, though few perceived it; for a cloud hovered over the lofty brow, and sometimes dimmed the diamond eyes, and, though yet more rarely, her brilliant wit displayed a pungency akin to bitterness.

While Mademoiselle de Fontaines thus exercised a forbearance and generosity for which none gave her credit—because they suspected not she had occasion, and least of all the fair girl herself—time rolled on, and winter spread his silvery mantle over the earth, and, still rolling on, left him in its rear, and again buds and blossoms gladdened the eye. It was the 25th of April, and lights gleamed, and tapestries waved, and beauteous ladies and gallant knights trod the stately measure to the sound of the far-echoing music, and all was revelry within the palace of Vincennes; for it was the anniversary of their absent sovereign's birth, and his mother, the still fair Blanche of Castile, held high festival in its honour.

Fairest among the revellers was Louise, and gayest among the gay; for since her visit to Giulio Bernardi, the cloud that was wont at times to overshadow her, had, though she scarce knew why, disappeared—and many a young knight gazed on her bright form, as she flitted past him, with that admiration which is akin to love. Foremost among these was the Count Albert de la Roche, who scarce left her side, and spared no act of courtesy which might aid in proclaiming him her devoted knight. But though her gentle and easy reception of his obsequious gallantry might have made the bold count deem his suit not unwelcome, somewhat of a change came over the spirit of his dream when he perceived with what alacrity Louise obeyed the summons of the queen, by whom she was always treated with the most marked kindness; for the Count de Montemar had ever proved himself one of her son's most loyal subjects, and his princely band of vassals had decided in Louis' favour the fate of many a battle.

Mademoiselle de Montemar had not occupied her place for many minutes beside the chair of state, ere intelligence was brought to Queen Blanche that a knight from the Holy Land craved admission to her presence.

"Admit him instantly," she exclaimed. "Right welcome to Blanche of Castile are all who have borne lance in the cause of the Holy Sepulchre; and thrice welcome will he be, if he bring tidings from my absent son and sovereign!"

The intimation of an arrival from that land, which was not merely the present abode of their good king, but in which sojourned so many others both near and dear to hundreds there, and whence such rare and uncertain tidings were received, acted like a spell on that assembly; the dance was abandoned, the music ceased, and all gathered near as they might presume, to hear—while many a heart beat tumultuously

in doubt of who the stranger guest might prove—one very dear, perhaps; or it might be that he brought tidings that that dear one never more might greet their eyes. Louise, who had not been dismissed, stepped back behind the queen's chair, and shaded by the overshadowing drapery that encircled that portion of the apartment, awaited the event unobserved, for a more powerful magnet was there in the person of the advancing knight.

"Count Henri de Brillon, you are most welcome," said the queen, as the knight, kneeling, kissed her hand.

Louise heard no more. It was he—her knight, returned in safety from that land which had proved the tomb of so many of France's noblest sons. Her first sensation was that of unmingled joy—her second, the benumbing recollection of his lengthened silence; and, wanting courage to meet him, she shrunk yet deeper into her retreat.

After his conference with the queen was ended, the Count de Brillon was surrounded by numerous friends of former days, and inquirers for those whom he had left in Palestine; and it was not until he had satisfied the anxiety of many a heart, and sent many away to weep who had not thought to have shed tears that night, that he found himself at liberty. Then Louise, who never ventured from her shelter, lost sight of him for awhile; and when he again met her eye, it was as the partner of her own intimate friend, Virginie de Fontaines. The sound of their light laughter broke upon her ear, and occasionally she could distinguish the silvery voice of Virginie, and the deeper tones in which the count replied.

"'Tis strange of Virginie," thought Louise; "but in the happiness of hearing of her own lover, she has forgotten that De Brillon is, or has been, mine."

Then followed regret for having thus secreted herself; but

unsupported by her father, who was absent for a time at Montemar, she felt unequal to the trial.

Long as Louise watched there, so long the association of her friend and former lover was continued, and she could even perceive that Virginie was exercising all those powers of fascination with which she was so pre-eminently gifted to chain him to her side. But Louise de Montemar was one of those unsuspecting beings who appear to exist merely to become the prey of the designing; and even at that moment she scarce harboured a thought that her affectionate friend was playing her false. "She sees me not," she reasoned, "and believes I have already departed." And depart she did, with a bursting heart, which hours of bitter weeping scarce sufficed to relieve.

The following morning Mademoiselle de Montemar did not leave her apartments until the hour when she usually waited on the queen, then calm, though heavy-hearted, she sallied forth, taking the nearest way to the royal presence. As she entered one of the galleries, she perceived two persons standing in one of the window recesses, and averse to hold converse with any one, she passed quickly on; but even the light sound of her rapid footsteps attracted the attention of at least one, and as they turned, she found herself confronted by Virginie de Fontaines and the newly-arrived knight.

Count Henri de Brillon appeared much surprised at seeing her, and somewhat abashed likewise, yet he lost no time in advancing to greet her.

"I had not the most remote idea you were here, dear lady," observed the count, when the first salutations had been interchanged.

"That is not marvellous, my lord, since but little communication has passed between us of late," replied the lady, coldly.

The count coloured, and was silent; but after a moment he recovered himself, and observed with a sigh, "It is but too true; our friends in beautiful France think but little of the poor crusader beneath the burning skies of Syria."

Indignant at finding the charge of neglect thus retorted on herself, the flush deepened on Louise's cheek, and she was about to make a haughty reply, which the count perceiving, quickly added—"Concerning myself, I can explain all things, if allowed an opportunity; and there is another," he continued, even more gently than he before had spoken—"there is another to whom I hope you will not deny an interview—my sole companion during the long exile to which your father condemned me—your once favourite Fidèle."

"Dear Louise," said the musical tones of Virginie, who now spoke for the first time, and, as she afterwards declared, lest a quarrel should supervene—"dear Louise, here comes the Count de la Roche; I thought he would not be far distant when she he terms the sweetest lady in France was here!" and she laughed merrily.

But Virginie had overshot her mark, and instead of exciting doubts of her friend's constancy, as she meditated, the powerful influence of jealousy fanned the love she sought to quench into a fiercer flame, and while his brow flushed, and his form dilated, De Brillon exclaimed—"The count is over bold to prate thus—I will teach him to keep a more seemly distance!" and he placed himself by the side of Louise, as if he would arrogate to himself the post of her protector.

"You likewise are over bold, sir count," said Louise, haughtily. "Louise de Montemar needs not the aid of any to secure that respect to which she has ever been accustomed." And sweeping proudly by, she pursued her way to the queen's apartments. As she disappeared, the count turned to demand

an explanation from his former companion, but she had vanished likewise.

It boots not to tell of how the returned crusader urged on De Montemar and his daughter that it was the force of circumstances, and not his act, that had left them thus in ignorance of his fate; and how, in the fervour of his love, he swore that his heart had never been one moment false to its fealty to Louise; nor how the frank old soldier, who had never in his life sought to disguise the truth, at length believed him all that he could wish, and his daughter was but too willing to share in the conviction.

The misunderstanding between the friends was sooner made up than that between the lovers; for Virginie easily persuaded Louise that in the Count de Brillon she did not recognize the spectral knight, of whose name she had been ignorant, and thenceforward the sisterly intercourse of the two maidens continued unbroken by a single argument.

As the summer advanced, preparations were made to celebrate, at Vincennes, with great state, the marriage of the powerful Count de Brillon with one of the wealthiest heiresses in France. Her father had wished it might take place at Montemar, in his own castle, and in the midst of his retainers; but this wish was overruled by the queen, whose god-daughter Louise was, and who desired to grace her nuptials by the royal presence.

The bridal-morning of Louise broke bright and rosy—bright as the hopes of the lovers it was to see united—rosy as the bevy of maidens who surrounded the fair bride on her awaking, pouring forth their congratulations, some tenderly, and some in light and sportive strain. Most fervent among the former were those of Virginie, who embraced her, and prayed for her future happiness in an impressive and affecting manner.

"But the time is not far distant when we may congratulate you likewise, is it, dear Virginie?" said the bride, smiling, while her eyes yet shone with the tears her friend's earnest expressions had called forth.

"I may not unravel the mystery I have always said enveloped my love," replied Mademoiselle de Fontaines, with a smile, in which, however, there was no merriment; "but it may be that my bridal is nearer than you dream of."

"May the saints grant it, dear friend, and may you be as happy that day as I am this," said Louise, affectionately.

"The tree that has been long bent never recovers its former elasticity, and a heart that has been long oppressed, as mine, can never hope to be so light as yours." Virginie's manner, as she said this, was so ambiguous and strange, that Louise longed to ask an explanation; for never before had the proud and lively girl alluded to unhappiness; and this also at the very moment when it seemed her bridal-day drew near. But they were no longer alone, for her other young companions, who had been engaged in admiring the rich attire of the bride, now rejoined them.

It would take more space than we can spare to describe that attire, or to detail the splendid procession that wound its way through the long galleries and down the broad staircases of the palace; our province is more with feelings and events than with pictures; suffice it to say that the crowd that filled to overflowing the royal chapel, comprised the fairest and most gallant in France, and the bride who, in her pearl-pounced robe, stood before the altar, was worthy to be surrounded by so noble an assembly.

The nuptial-rites were finished—the Count de Brillon had plighted his troth to Louise, and received hers in return—the benediction had been pronounced, and the bride and bride-groom still knelt before the altar. Suddenly Louise fell

forward, overcome, as all believed, by the solemnity of the sacrament. De Brillon started to his feet, and her father sprang forward to aid in raising her; but she was, to all appearance, lifeless. They carried her forth where the fresh breeze blew upon her, and the bright sun looked down upon her, while the voice of affection implored her to look on, and live for, those who loved her so devotedly. But it was all of no avail—the ear was deaf—the eye was dim—the breath trembled not upon the lip—and the splendid robes which had been folded over the young bride's hopeful bosom, were now to deck her for the tomb.

There was heard that night the voice of mourning or regret from almost every chamber in Vincennes, for Louise's gentleness had won her many hearts, and even they who loved her not were awe-stricken at her fate. So young—so loved—so blest—to die—to be cut off thus suddenly in the very fulness of her happiness—there was enough in such an evidence of the instability of human things to impress deeply even the most thoughtless and unfeeling. But in one chamber there were no tears—no lamentations for the lost one; though there they might have been expected to be poured forth with all the earnestness of sorrowing friendship; for it was that whose door Virginie de Fontaines had closed against all intruders. Within she sat, her hands clasped, her cheek flushed, and her eye brilliant with excitement, while a troubled expression clouded her brow with anxiety and half regret. There stood none now between De Brillon and herself; once before, in the absence of Louise, had she won him to forget her, and the same beauty—the same fascination, both of voice and manner, were still the portion of Virginie: might they not win him back again? That thought bade her cheek grow bright, but scarce with hope, for with it came the remembrance of one bitter and reproachful glance, which, even in the first

moment of his overwhelming grief, De Brillon had cast upon her. Did he suspect her of any foul practices against the life so dear to him? If so, then was he lost for ever; and she had steeped her soul in guilt, and stained her hands, and all for nought—had served the tempter, and yet forfeited the bribe with which she had been tempted; and she could almost have wished the deed undone! But no, she would not think it; he dared not, he could not suspect *her;* and the future should be as she desired it. Let her not regret her triumph in the very hour of its accomplishment! And yet, strive as she would, regret still struggled with every prouder feeling; and uncontrollable as were the passions which had led her thus deeply and blindly into evil, the better principles of our fallen nature still asserted their existence, and bade her shudder at the recollection of how dearly that triumph had been purchased.

Meanwhile De Brillon paced to and fro in grief and wretchedness that could know nor rest nor consolation. Not merely did he mourn one dearly loved, with whom every hope of earthly happiness had been entwined, but with the despairing anguish which knew that for his unrepented fault she had been offered up the guiltless sacrifice, he mourned for Louise as one whom his own thoughtless act had murdered. For while yet the life of his lost bride was deemed within recall, the count's eye had read a passing expression on Virginie's face, which revealed at once to him the extent of his misfortune and its source. And bitterly there now came over him the remembrance of those by-gone hours when, scarce even for the while forgetful of Louise, but led away by heedless vanity, he sat at Virginie de Fontaines' feet, and listened to her voice, and felt flattered by her smile, and when she bound around his arm her scarf, and bade him wear it for her sake. True, the gift had soon been cast aside, and

the giver as soon forgotten; while the brief trifling with the coquette who sought to make every one by turns her slave, had sat lightly on his conscience; but now each word of idle compliment—each act of youthful folly—seemed to burn into his soul, and bitterly, but vainly, were they now repented, when he recognized their punishment in the terrible and cruel blow which crushed him to the earth. Yet must the suspicion be locked within his own mind, for he had no proof to support it; and the necessity for such silence but augmented his hatred and detestation of her who, for his love, had wrought such evil.

Unable to weep, unable to pray, De Brillon paced the room, and though it was midnight, no thought of rest was in his mind. At length, a continued knocking at the door being unheeded, his page ventured to enter, and with broken voice, and eyes still wet with tears, presented a small packet, which he said a stranger had with difficulty found means to bring into the palace at that hour. The count signed impatiently for him to lay it down, and to withdraw.

"He prayed me by my love for the Lady Louise to deliver it without delay; and my lord, by his, to open it," persisted the page.

In an instant it was torn open—a small gold phial and a scroll were its contents. On the latter were written these few words—"If he, who having a ruby of highest price could once cast it by for a pebble of the shore, would now regain the gem when stolen, love may unclose the eyes which jealousy hath sealed; but let the foolish merchant thank him who bade sleep take the place of death." There required no more; De Brillon comprehended the whole at a glance; and it needs not to tell how, rushing on the instant to the chamber of gloomy state, he startled the watchers by the bier by his wild looks and strange demeanour; nor how the bride was

awakened from that death-like slumber, to bless her father with her smile, and to pardon the husband whose past folly had placed her in such peril. Nor needs it to describe the but half-satisfied wonder of the court at the strange tale which but imperfectly was told; nor how, though no charge was uttered against her—though no accusing whisper breathed —the consciousness of detected guilt weighed heavily on Virginie de Fontaines, and shrinking from the presence of those she had sought to injure so irreparably, she forsook the world for ever, and passed the remainder of her days in a convent, where she ere long became as renowned for her piety as she once had been for wit and fascination; and where we would trust the crime she had in heart committed was more the subject of her regret and tears than its prevention by the secret agency of Giulio Bernardi the magician.

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